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VOL.11 NO.7

Let Me Out of Here!

Daniel Brown's Struggle Against Classroom Isolation

See Page 4

PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

The Integrity of Our Profession

For those of us already licensed and engaged in the practice of teaching, teacher licensure seldom ranks among the hot issues that ignite fiery commitment. We shove it to the back burner or (more frequently) move it off the stove entirely. That's understandable. It's also a mistake.

The issue of teacher licensure is, at bottom, the issue of the integrity of the teaching profession. Unless we guard the entryway to our profession, we risk our prestige, our dignity, and the public trust. The imperative before us is therefore clear. All of us in the education community must commit ourselves to the creation and enforcement of licensure standards that are rigorous, research-based, free of loopholes, and relevant to the stubborn complexity of everyday classroom realities.

It's our responsibility to see to it that future practitioners know that they'll be called on to demonstrate mastery of the liberal arts curriculum, the subject matter within their area of specialization, and teaching methodology.

They must know that they'll be required to pass a demanding and varied assessment process that includes a performance component. They must further know that they'll be evaluated regularly during their internships.

It is also up to us to see to it that state legislators, governors, and chief state school officers once and for all end emergency licensure. Right now. Immediately. No excuses.

NEA President
Keith Geiger

In addition, we must convince local school boards and administrators that they have an obligation to recruit only graduates of teacher preparation programs that have been accredited by an autonomous national agency—and then assign those graduates only within their areas of expertise.

We have a professional responsibility to make it clear to all who wish to join us as colleagues that teaching America's children is a privilege—a privilege that must be earned by meeting imposing requirements. This is why we must press, in every state, for licensure standards that are a barrier to the unprepared and the unqualified.

Right now, we're falling far short of this goal. We have nothing even remotely resembling universal standards that teacher preparation programs must satisfy before they declare their graduates eligible for licensure.

We have nothing even remotely resembling a national consensus on the skills, talents, and attitudes we expect prospective teachers to demonstrate.

Licensing requirements vary greatly from state to state. Our profession lacks a commonly accepted quality control mechanism. And that's one reason—in fact, a primary reason—we lack the full public confidence that is essential to the success of our mission.

Is this problem difficult? Yes. Insoluble? Not at all. The quality control mechanism we need has been in existence since 1954. That's the year that NEA, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, and the Council of Chief State School Officers created the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

NCATE's commitment remains what it has been for nearly four decades: to prod our profession toward the adoption of more rigorous licensure standards and to assist schools of education in the creation of more intense, more comprehensive, more demanding programs.

As a member of NCATE's executive board, I've seen this process up close. And it's remarkably impressive. The problem, of course, is that teacher education programs are under no mandate to secure NCATE approval. Of the 1,200 schools of education in the U.S., only 500 have sought NCATE accreditation.

Clearly the prestige of our profession demands that more institutions seek the NCATE stamp of approval. We need to move toward the day when all candidates for licensure understand that they are expected to be graduates of NCATE-accredited teacher preparation programs.

This we owe to our students, our communities, our nation—and, above all, to the profession we're devoted to.

Parents deserve assurance that every teacher is competent to meet all children's educational needs.

School districts deserve assurance that every teacher is maximally (not minimally) competent.

And every member of the education community deserves absolute assurance that the foundation of the teaching profession is strong—and the integrity of the profession secure.

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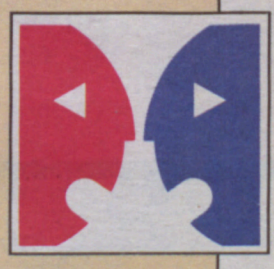

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NATIONAL NEWS

What Should Teachers Know and Be Able To Do?

Doctors and lawyers set their own professional standards. Starting next year, teachers will, too.

The five-year-old National Board for Professional Teaching Standards is expected to move a step closer to its goal of setting standards for all teachers when it approves the first two of 30 sets of subject area standards this month.

The NEA-backed Board will likely approve professional standards for English and language arts teachers who work with students aged 11 to 15 and for "early adolescence generalists."

One more time, with a little more pep: This month, a board *of* teachers will approve standards *for* teachers written *by* teachers.

Sounds like a real profession, no?

Ahhh yes, says Durham, New Hampshire, teacher Linda Rief, who chaired the Board committee that spent hundreds of hours over the past three years developing the English and language arts standards.

"Unlike doctors and lawyers and engineers, teachers are not valued for what they know and are able to do," Rief says. "I hope these standards will change that."

Standards are step one toward the Board's twin goals of professionalizing teaching and improving practice.

Next year, assessments of whether teachers are reaching the standards will be piloted across the country. The Board's piloting corps, the $7.1 million Field Test Network of researchers and teachers, includes many NEA members.

And finally, in 1994-95, teachers will have the opportunity to apply for National Board Certification in middle school English and language arts—and as many as four other subjects. In the following years, certification will be available in 30 other subjects (see chart).

"The ultimate purpose of these standards is to enhance the education we're offering kids, to make what's happening in the classroom the best it can be."

—Linda Rief, teacher and chair
Early Adolescence/English Language Arts Standards Committee

Unlike licensure—which is state-regulated and mandatory, with minimum standards for beginning teachers—certification will be voluntary and set high standards for teachers with at least three years experience.

"The ultimate purpose of certification," says Rief, "is to enhance the education we're offering kids, to make what's happening in the classroom the best it can be.

"Just developing the standards," she continues, "made me a better teacher. It made me question everything I did in the classroom. Could I do what I'm saying other teachers should do? It really made me think about my own practice."

How will teachers be measured against the national standards? "Certainly not by standardized tests," Rief states flatly.

Although assessment techniques are far from final, they will likely include two parts. First, teachers will need to compile portfolios of their own and student work and make a video of their own teaching.

Second, teachers will be asked to come to an assessment site during the summer to take an exam on subject matter and to participate in simulations and extensive interviews. Teachers are now being trained to evaluate those who choose to participate.

A member of the National Board himself, NEA President Keith Geiger says simply going through the certification process should improve teaching.

"Everybody who goes through the process—whether or not they pass—must be able to say to the world, 'I am a better teacher today than when I started the process.' In my mind, if it doesn't do that, then it's not the right process."

Beyond improving practice, many educators believe, tough standards and national certification will provide teachers with more autonomy, more responsible roles in school transformation efforts, and possibly more money.

And, they believe, certification will increase the status of the teaching profession in the eyes of other professionals, parents and community members, kids—who may be more likely to choose teaching as a career—even in the eyes of teachers themselves.

"Too many teachers don't feel good about themselves," Rief says. After certification, she warns, "no more saying, 'I'm just a teacher.'"

—Stefanie Weiss

NATIONAL TEACHING CERTIFICATE CATEGORIES

Here's a list of fields for which certificates will be issued. Committees will recommend to the Standards Board the specific requirements teachers should meet. Many of these committees are already at work.

Early Childhood (ages 3-8)
- Generalist

Middle Childhood (ages 7-12)
- Generalist
- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies/History

Early and Middle Childhood (ages 3-12)
- Art
- Foreign Language—Spanish, French, and others
- Guidance Counseling
- Library/Media
- Music
- Physical Education/Health

Early Adolescence (ages 11-15)
- Generalist
- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies/History

Adolescence and Young Adulthood (ages 14-18)
- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies/History

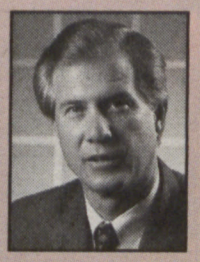
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood (ages 11-18 plus)
- Art
- Foreign Language—French, Spanish, and others
- Guidance Counseling
- Library/Media
- Music
- Physical Education /Health
- Vocational Education—Agriculture, Business, Health Occupations, Home Economics, and Industry/Technology.

For teachers of special needs students—Limited English Proficient Students (e.g. English as a Second Language, bilingual education) and Special Education and Exceptional Needs Students (e.g. moderately handicapped, severely and profoundly handicapped, deaf and blind, and gifted and talented)—the Board is still considering how to establish categories, assessments, and certificates.

HEROES & ZEROES

First things first. From the creators of the video game Genesis comes a very welcome grant to enrich teaching. With $250,000 from the Sega Youth Education and Health Foundation, NEA's National Foundation for the Improvement of Education (NFIE) recently assembled 90 of the nation's top teachers.

The purpose: a five-day summit allowing NFIE's Christa McAuliffe Educators and Fellows to report on their successes with their cutting edge projects.



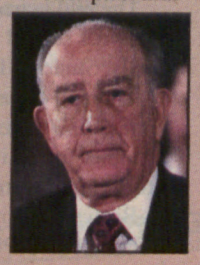
Says Sega President Tom Kalinske, "It is because we believe that teachers are key to bringing about positive change that we both support and applaud the McAuliffe Educators and Fellows." Well-deserved applause all around.

A Say-It-Ain't-So Award to the Springfield (Virginia) Gun Owners Foundation, which recently offered $1,000 to the best student essay against waiting periods for gun purchases. The proposed topic: "How Firearms Waiting Periods Endanger Self-Defense: Lessons from the L.A. Riots One Year Later." Sad, but true.

For making philanthropy fun, hats off to Matel Dawson, a 71-year-old Ford forklift operator with a ninth grade education, who recently gave $50,000 to the United Negro College Fund. "I made a few good investments," he said. But "this is the best investment I can make."

And a bow to author and former teacher Alan Shawn Feinstein, who pledged $5 million to the Rhode Island college that devises the best proposal for an undergraduate degree in public service. Last year, Feinstein gave big bucks to 18 high schools to integrate public service into their curriculums.

From the one Democratic governor who supported former President Bush's campaign, another zinger. Maryland Governor William Donald Schaefer recently proposed a school voucher plan that would transfer already scarce public monies to private schools.



Speaking of scarce, how many more years on Schaefer's term?

COVER STORY

Let Me Ou

Photographs by Christina Freitag

Kentucky's Daniel Brown thrives in a classroom built around teacher collaboration, not isolation.

Traditionally, a teacher works with students behind closed doors, in splendid isolation from other teachers, other students, and the entire outside world. This is a story about breaking with that tradition.

The walls in Kentucky teacher Daniel Brown's classroom mean very little. For Brown and the 21 kids in his homeroom class, individual, isolated classrooms are a thing of the past.

The youngsters in Brown's homeroom at Frankfort's Second Street Primary School are all part of a larger unit—a 63-student "family" called Primary Explosion.

Brown and two other teachers lead the Primary Explosion family. Their students, who range in age from five to 10, report to three different homerooms—but that's primarily for record-keeping purposes.

The real learning that takes place in Brown's school transcends classroom walls. Students interact with different teachers in different groups at different times. And the entire "family" comes together for activities that range from story time to sing-alongs.

Brown and his colleagues at the Second Street Primary School are among the growing number of NEA members across the nation who are busting out of the confines of the traditional self-contained classroom.

In Brown's case, the impetus for change came from Kentucky's two-year-old statewide education reform law. That legislation requires that all K-3 students study in multi-age, multi-ability groups, and not receive grades.

Second Street teachers worked together to implement that mandate. They came up with the concept of learning "families," each with a carefully chosen student mix.

"The bottom line was diversity," says Brown. "We wanted a good mix of age, race, gender, and ability."

For Brown and his colleagues, thinking and working beyond the single-classroom mindset hasn't always been easy. But they like the result.

"Working together like this allows us to better meet the needs of all students," says Brown. "Some kids simply work better with one teacher than another."

"The disadvantage is having to find the time to consult with one another and hold planning meetings—things you don't have to consider when you work alone with a classroom of kids," adds Brown. "But we feel our program is well worth the time it takes to collaborate."

In fact, Brown finds collaboration so worthwhile that he's now working with other educators who aren't even at his school. Through a national writing project, Brown got to know Anne Robbins, an NEA member who teaches creative writing at the local high school. Brown invited Robbins and her students to work with Primary Explosion.

On their first visit, the teenagers in Robbins' creative writing class helped Brown's students revise a short story they'd written. Since then the high school kids have returned several times.

"Everyone enjoys these sessions," says Brown. "Sometimes the older students read their writing to my kids and ask for their opinions. Other times they help my kids with their writing."

Brown is also doing what he can to break down the walls that separate K-12 and higher education. He's working closely with Rebecca Powell of nearby Kentucky State University. Brown is helping KSU education majors compile student portfolios and teach writing to young children, and Powell has presented lessons on whole language to Brown's students.

Busting the isolation of a classroom's four walls doesn't always have to mean stepping outside the classroom. The wonders of modern technology are helping many educators reach out to new resources and new inspirations.

One example: The IBM/NEA School Renewal Network, which links NEA members in innovative schools via computer modems to each other as well as researchers at federally funded educational research centers and several major universities.

Other educators are sharing ideas and resources with colleagues across the country through commercial electronic networks like America Online.

In Pensacola, Florida, fifth grade teacher Marsha Burmeister brings together teachers, parents, and students at Suter Elementary through an electronic information bulletin board she runs from her home. Besides school information, Burmeister posts book reviews and items of interest to other teachers.

Inside her classroom, Burmeister has other means of reaching beyond her classroom walls. Through grants and donations from parents and other teachers, she's been able to purchase a classroom telephone line and computer modem, too. The phone is primarily for parent-teacher communication: an answering machine gives the day's homework assignment and lets parents leave messages without disturbing instruction. After school hours, the line is used for a homework hotline.

Seattle's ElDoris Turner helps new teachers overcome their feelings of isolation.

But the phone has other uses. If a math problem involves the cost of a bicycle, for instance, and a student thinks the price is unrealistic, the class can call a bicycle shop to check for actual bike prices. If a student gets sick in class, Burmeister doesn't have to leave the youngster to call a parent.

"It reassures the kids to know that their parents are at the other end of the phone on my desk," she says. "And I like

COVER STORY

t o f H e r e !

In Louisville, substitute teacher Julie King (left), teacher aide Melody Cunningham, and Daniel Brown share ideas about teaching the 63 kids in the Population Explosion family, ages 5 to 10.

the idea that the parents are there if I have a discipline problem.''

At Colorado's Eaglecrest High School, in the Cherry Creek school district, NEA members are ending classroom isolation through instructional teams—most of them interdisciplinary—set up to promote faculty professional growth.

Each of the school's 110 teachers—along with counselors, the school nurse, the school psychologist, and the pupil services representative—serves on at least one team. The teams meet at least twice a month.

Team leaders, called instructional leaders, have reduced teaching loads—four classes instead of five. They mentor new or struggling teachers, help design and implement staff workshops, speak to students on various topics, and provide liaison between administrators and faculty.

''We have many functions,'' says instructional leader Mark Onstott, ''but our central purpose is to help teachers learn, as a team and from one another.''

Part of that learning process is observing one another in the classroom to get new ideas for subject presentation. And sometimes these observations help break down what can be one of the highest barriers of all—the wall between teachers and students.

To learn how students feel, each member of one team shadowed a student one-on-one for a full day. The team member went to physical education class, sat in on the math lesson, ate lunch in the cafeteria, did whatever the student did.

''Seeing the teacher as a student does offers a whole new perspective,'' says Onstott. ''It's a real learning experience that makes us reevaluate how we do things.''

Each team at Colorado's Eaglecrest High does planning to make sure lessons cross discipline lines. Courses are scheduled to enable teachers to work as a team with the same group of students and to emphasize the relationships that exist among disciplines.

The team concept is so important to the Eaglecrest faculty that, when faced with a significant loss in state money this year, teachers decided the teams were the one thing they'd never let go.

''Next year we may not have so many teams, and instructional leaders may have to lead more than one team,'' says Onstott, ''but keeping the concept is our first priority. It makes for better teachers—a plus for students.''

The isolation of the traditional classroom is particularly hard on teachers who are just starting out. In Seattle, Washington, veteran teachers are working full time with new teachers, too many of whom are leaving after just a year in the classroom.

''Beginning teachers feel overwhelmed by problems they didn't confront during training,'' says veteran teacher ElDoris Turner. ''Things like the large numbers of students they must deal with, classroom management, preparing required reports.''

Seattle Education Association members like Turner are helping new teachers get over these frustrations and break out of their classroom isolation. SEA's program, called Staff Training, Assistance, and Review is based on a similar one in Columbus, Ohio.

Some 15 volunteer veteran teachers—called mentor consultants—were selected from 68 applicants to participate in STAR. Ten of them are working full time, individually, with up to 14 newcomers (and a few selected experienced teachers). The other five are on standby. Veteran teachers rotate into the program every three years.

El Doris Turner is one of the 10 full-timers.

''We observe the first-year teachers and offer help,'' she says. ''It might be tips about differences in learning styles, how to deal with paperwork or discipline problems, or how to evaluate their own effectiveness.''

New perspectives. Sharing expertise. Learning from professionals in and out of the classroom. Using new telecommunications systems. When educators wield concepts and technologies like these, a classroom's walls cannot confine the minds of those who teach and learn there. There just aren't any more walls to separate.

—Diane Dismuke

NEA Research Projects Inspire Collaboration

Often a project that brings teachers together sets the wheels in motion for further collaboration. Once teachers see the benefits of sharing ideas, they don't want to stop.

California teacher Diane Bierman is one of 13 teachers in the Sacramento City district who've participated in NEA's new Readings in Educational Research project. The program encourages teachers to conduct their own research, guided by NEA-developed packets that summarize and explain the latest research in a given educational area.

In Sacramento, the Instruction and Professional Development Committee of the Sacramento City Teachers Association used the NEA Readings in Research materials to study language acquisition, a vital subject because of the ever-growing number of non English-speaking children in local schools.

''Our findings were extremely helpful,'' says Bierman, ''but just as valuable were the intangible benefits.''

Bierman's committee consisted of teachers from elementary, middle, and secondary schools. Before they worked together on this study, there was little collaboration, if any, among teachers at different levels.

''We discovered how much alike we are, that our needs as people and as professionals are the same,'' says Bierman. Groups like Bierman's that take part in the Readings in Education Research program can use their findings to impact policies that affect their work, explains June VanderVeen, a senior policy analyst with NEA. ''The research gives credibility to their requests,'' says VanderVeen.

The nine packets available through the NEA Readings in Educational Research program deal with the research process itself, and with class size, cooperative learning, classroom management, retention in grade, parental involvement, homework, learning and language, intelligence and schooling, and cognitive strategies.

To order any of the packets, send $20 (make check payable to the National Education Association) to Readings-RER, NEA Communications, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. If you're an NEA member, please include the name of your local Association.

—D. D.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Values Program Halves Teen Pregnancies

How can you cut the teen pregnancy rate at your school? A Richmond, Virginia, teacher shares the key to her success.

Dan Collier

Armstrong High School home economics teacher Pauline Frazier has used a national program called Community of Caring to help cut her school's teen pregnancy rate in half.

Over the past five years, Armstrong High School in Richmond, Virginia, has cut its annual tally of student pregnancies by more than half, from 35 in school year 1987-88 to 16 in 1991-92.

Home economics teacher and NEA member Pauline Frazier has been a leader in the school's effort to, as she puts it, "prevent the teen pregnancy problem from moving on to the next generation."

What's Frazier's secret? Effective use of Armstrong's health and family life education curriculum—and of a national program called Community of Caring. The program's premise: you can help kids avoid destructive behaviors by teaching values, self-respect, and decision-making skills.

Sponsored by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr., Foundation, Community of Caring operates in 111 schools in 20 states, training teachers and providing curriculum materials.

Armstrong's Community of Caring program, started in 1988, is aimed at ninth graders. A faculty planning group selects a different theme to explore each year. Every month, the school holds two activities—one for all ninth graders, and one for the whole school—on a topic related to the theme.

Armstrong's 1992-93 theme is teen pregnancy, a big concern at the school. Frazier speculates that some girls may "have decided to get pregnant because they wanted someone to care about them."

Frazier attributes much of the recent decrease in pregnancies to the Community of Caring program—and hopes this year's special emphasis on the subject will cut the number even further.

"After focusing on pregnancy in our program, girls and their boyfriends will not—we hope—make the same decision they might have before. They will have learned to respect and take care of themselves."

The monthly topics students chose to examine in relation to teen pregnancy include caring for families, chemical abuse, AIDS, child abuse, domestic violence, and gangs and cliques.

Each monthly subtheme is highlighted on the third Wednesday of the month, when every ninth grade teacher addresses the topic within the context of his or her discipline. That Friday, all ninth graders meet during the last period of the day for a culminating activity.

The whole school also learns about the topic that month through an assembly, play, community event, science fair, or teen forum. A faculty team—Frazier, eight teachers from all disciplines, a guidance counselor, the school nurse, and the school's attendance officer—is responsible for the schoolwide programs.

This month, at the annual science fair, ninth graders' projects will reflect teen pregnancy and the related topics of study. And at the annual teen forum in May, experts will speak and students will lead group discussions on difficult problems facing young people, from family abuse to Black males in American society.

Students and teachers slide easily into the program's classroom activities. "The students are excited about them," Frazier says. "And teachers get all the materials they need from the Community of Caring manual."

As lead teacher in the Community of Caring effort, Frazier prepares and duplicates lesson plans and student handouts. Each teacher has a copy of the Community of Caring textbook for the year, and Frazier has the Teacher's Resource Binder.

"Even if teachers don't feel comfortable talking about the various topics, the materials make it easy for them to become part of the solution," she says.

The results of Armstrong's program are impressive. Beyond the teen pregnancy rate reduction, Frazier cites changes that range from cleaner halls and bathrooms to higher academic averages, more students going to college, improved student and staff attendance—and "many more young men and women with self-respect and self-control."

—Mary Faber
NEA Human and Civil Rights

For more information about this values education program, write to Community of Caring, Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr., Foundation, 1350 New York Ave., N.W., Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005.

WASHINGTON WATCH

Donna Shalala, Secretary of Health and Human Services and former chancellor of the University of Wisconsin, will shepherd the Clinton Administration's programs on child health and day care, helping get children ready to learn.

Best Win For Education Employees

After seven very long years and two Presidential vetoes, the Family and Medical Leave Act is now law. Employers with 50 or more employees must now allow employees to take 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for a new baby or sick family member. The bill—which takes effect August 5—was the first President Clinton signed into law, signaling an Administration that will continue to put people first.

One To Watch

The new, higher numbers on the size and scope of the federal budget deficit mean an even tougher battle to secure adequate federal investment in education. President Clinton's call for sacrifice is not likely to miss any group of Americans, although NEA will continue to fight to keep children from having to bear the burden. Main point: let's not free our children from the deficit by shackling them in ignorance.

And What You Can Do

Speak up for the children. Contact your Senators (Washington, DC 20510, 202/224-3121) and your Representative (Washington, DC 20515, 202/224-3121) to let them know elementary and secondary education programs must be reauthorized, enhanced, and provided with increased funds.

Political Cartoon of the Month

WASHINGTON UPDATES ITS PHONE SYSTEM
IF YOU'RE CALLING TO PUMMEL THE PRESIDENT, PRESS 1...
TO CUDGEL CONGRESS, PRESS 2...
IF YOU'RE FURIOUS, BUT DON'T KNOW WHY, STAY ON THE LINE, AND SOMETHING WILL COME ALONG SHORTLY

By Wasserman for the Boston Globe

Congressional Quote of the Month

"Giving our students the best education in the world is a moral imperative, and, especially, an economic necessity."

—Richard Riley
Secretary of Education

Local Look

OHIO

Teacher Tutors

The Columbus Education Association recently won some $1.2 million in back pay and benefits for 88 members who were underpaid as tutors for six years, starting in 1984-85.

The local school board agreed to the settlement when CEA and the Ohio Education Association Legal Services Program presented a claim based on the Ohio Supreme Court's 1988 *Brown vs. Milton Union Exempted Village* decision.

In that case, the Court ruled that unless a local contract says otherwise, tutors are entitled to be paid at the same rate as teachers.

The Columbus case netted the highest back pay settlement awarded members in OEA history. Average individual award is $11,340.31. The school board has also given 33 of the tutors continuing contracts.

NEW JERSEY

A Folding Carrier

If your district's health insurance carrier folds, who gets stuck with your doctor's bills?

"You do," said the Bloomfield, New Jersey, school board back in 1987, when employees' insurance checks started bouncing. "We paid the premiums—that's all we're required to do."

The New Jersey Education Association went to bat for the 120 members of the Bloomfield Education Association, who'd been stuck with $130,000 in unprocessed medical claims when the carrier went into receivership.

The board won a lower court decision that the BEA's grievance on the matter wasn't arbitrable, but the New Jersey higher courts reversed that decision.

In 1992 an arbitrator ruled that the school board's refusal to reimburse teachers for medical costs violated the district contract. The board has now paid $70,000 of the unprocessed claims, and BEA members have filed claims for the rest with the state, which holds the insurance company's receivership account.

TEXAS

At Last, Arbitration

The employees of El Paso's Ysleta school district have become the first public employees in Texas to have third-party binding arbitration available to them as a device for settling grievances.

"The new superintendent, who came from California, was dismayed to discover the number of grievances that were going all the way to the school-board level," explains Eva Gonzalez, president of the Ysleta Teachers Association.

"That's why he was willing to make the change. Since every binding arbitration is going to cost the district money, principals now have an incentive to settle grievances at the building level."

Texas' legal ban on collective bargaining for public employees has slowed local districts' adoption of practices such as binding arbitration, which are fairly common in collective bargaining environments.

IN ALASKA

WILL THEY LEARN TO HATE?

The children of Alaska come in all sizes, shapes and colors. They aren't born to hate. They learn bigotry from adults.

The recent circulation of hate mail and racial confrontations in our schools and city mean that as a community we have failed fully to respect and value the rich diversity of Alaska's people.

Spend a few minutes today talking with a child you love. Explain how each of us—of whatever race or culture—is beautiful and unique.

The education employees who work with Alaska's children deplore hate in any form, toward any individual or group. We especially thank those parents who have already come forward to work toward racial harmony in our schools.

Together we can teach tolerance and understanding.

NEA-ALASKA

Anchorage Education Association
Anchorage Daily News

Anchorage Local Battles Intolerance

The Anchorage Education Association and NEA-Alaska have joined forces in an active campaign against hatred and prejudice. Sparking the initiative were a series of ugly incidents in Anchorage public schools.

Letters from a white supremacist group began showing up last fall in the mailboxes of junior and senior high school kids. About that same time, a local high school was the scene of a racially motivated fight.

"Anchorage educators have always worked to prevent racial or ethnic hatred and conflict," says Anchorage Education Association President Rob Pfisterer. AEA has traditionally maintained an active minority concerns committee, and for several years, the schools have offered a conflict resolution program.

But AEA wanted to send an even clearer message to the community.

"We wanted to address the situation in a form everyone would see," says Pfisterer. "Our AEA board asked that we put together an ad that would reduce hate and prejudice. We then went to the NEA-Alaska board, and they passed a similar motion."

Working together with NEA-Alaska President Claudia Douglas and Assistant Executive Director Karla Feeley, the local created this ad. *The Anchorage Daily News*, which ran the ad, contributed a special low advertising rate.

The ad received such positive response that AEA is considering running it again.

ILLINOIS

Aides Join Up

With their 33 different work sites and at least five different job titles, it wasn't an easy task, but Springfield's 150 instructional assistants have banded together to join the NEA.

By a vote of 92-18, the group joined Springfield's 1,050 teachers as part of NEA and the Illinois Education Association. Biggest issues leading up to the vote: "We wanted more job security and more respect," says teacher's aide Diana Gray.

Although the group is just beginning to bargain its first contract, Gray says some effects of the Association vote have been immediate. "The aides feel like more of a group now. We know each other and can support each other.

"And we feel more respected as important contributors to our schools."

The Springfield local bargains for a wide range of positions, including teacher aides, computer aides, library aides, aides for students who are visually or hearing impaired, and family facilitators.

MISSISSIPPI

The Wrong Message

Sixty NEA members were among Yazoo City teachers who staged a one-day sick-out to protest the inadequacy of punitive measures taken against two students by the local school board.

The two students joined in with another student who "jumped, pounced at, and started pulling my hair," says former Yazoo City teacher Cookie White, who was covering a colleague's class when the incident took place. White now teaches in a nearby town.

The first child was clearly guilty of assault, say bystanders, and she was suspended. The other two—whose behavior could not be substantiated—were put on strict probation.

Says Yazoo Association of Educators President John Wallace: "Students are being given the wrong message here. School board decisions must let everyone know that such actions will not be tolerated."

State Side

FLORIDA

A Faint Blueprint

Two years ago the Florida legislature launched "Blueprint 2000"—a plan for decentralizing school management and providing accountability for educational excellence. But the state failed to fund training programs necessary to make the plan a reality.

Says FTP-NEA President Jeff Wright in a joint statement with Florida Education Association/United President Pat Tornillo: "The legislature's latest—and quite arguably, best—effort at true education reform is a naked document. The rhetoric is wonderful, the ideas are meritorious.

"But until we put money into Blueprint 2000, it really isn't ready for public display."

MICHIGAN

Pioneering for Progress

The Michigan Education Association recently named four school districts as partners in its "pioneer schools" project, which will use site-based decision making to create new models of teaching and learning.

The four districts—Lakeview at Battle Creek, Mendon (already the site of an NEA Learning Lab), Pontiac, and Port Huron—were selected on the basis of the community's commitment to change.

"We hope that pioneer schools will institutionalize site-based decision making," notes MEA President Julius Maddox, "and pave the way for all Michigan schools to become empowerment models."

Across Lake Michigan, the Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) recently formed a network of 22 school districts to develop innovative restructuring programs. As with the Michigan project, administrators, educators, parents, and community members will be working together.

CONNECTICUT

A Voice for Change

Amid the voices clamoring for reform, says the Connecticut Education Association, that of the classroom teacher has too often been drowned out.

CEA hopes its new publication, *What Connecticut Teachers Need for Effective Schooling* will change that.

CEA asked distinguished education practitioners to write on the subject from their own point of view. The result is a collection of 22 essays presenting the very individual opinions of writers in specialties from art to agriculture, business to bilingual education, social work to science.

The 42-page booklet is the fourth in a series of occasional papers CEA distributes to state officials and the press, as well as to members.

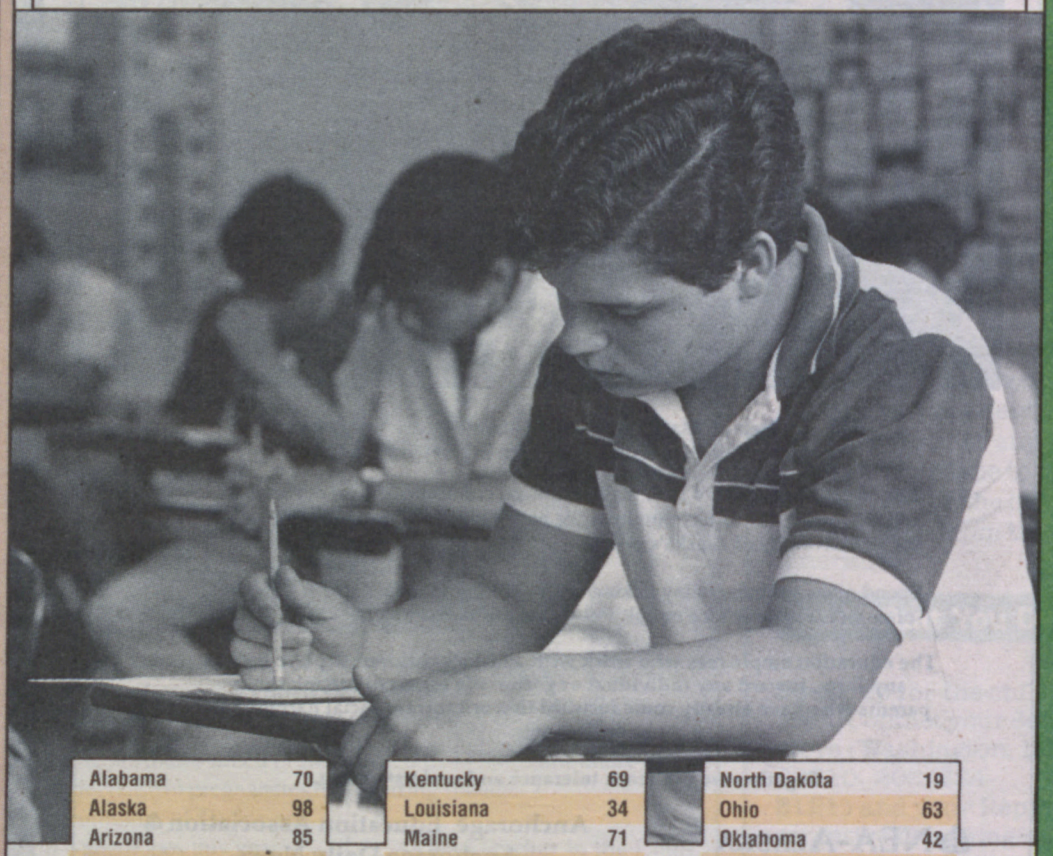
TACKLING THE TOUGH ONES

500,000 Kids Now Take AP Exams

The number of high school kids taking Advanced Placement exams quadrupled from 1978 to 1992—and the average scores on the exams haven't fallen.

Nationwide, 42 percent of all high schools offer AP courses, though nearly a third of the kids who take the courses don't take the AP exams.

Below: a state-by-state listing showing the number of AP exams taken per 1,000 eleventh and twelfth graders. The national average is 98 exams.



Alabama	70	Kentucky	69	North Dakota	19
Alaska	98	Louisiana	34	Ohio	63
Arizona	85	Maine	71	Oklahoma	42
Arkansas	29	Maryland	145	Oregon	65
California	147	Massachusetts	134	Pennsylvania	79
Colorado	128	Michigan	76	Rhode Island	89
Connecticut	134	Minnesota	40	South Carolina	141
District of Columbia	220	Mississippi	38	South Dakota	18
Delaware	120	Missouri	38	Tennessee	74
Florida	181	Montana	44	Texas	57
Georgia	85	Nebraska	41	Utah	211
Hawaii	129	Nevada	80	Vermont	84
Idaho	47	New Hampshire	83	Virginia	170
Illinois	101	New Jersey	136	Washington	57
Indiana	59	New Mexico	80	West Virginia	55
Iowa	31	New York	170	Wisconsin	48
Kansas	35	North Carolina	95	Wyoming	42

Source: The College Board

OREGON

Informing the Public

Public schools here face two serious problems: a two-year-old property tax limitation and a 1991 bill calling for massive education restructuring.

The tax limitation—sold as property tax relief that wouldn't harm schools—requires the state to make up lost property tax dollars to schools from the state's general funds. The public needs to understand, says OEA President Karen Famous, that this measure didn't guarantee any certain level of funding. And unless Oregon is able to increase its revenue significantly through a new source or tax restructuring, schools will suffer. Famous is asking OEA's 35,500 members to spread the word about the seriousness of the situation.

"We need to let voters and elected officials know that we will do our part," says Famous. "But we want them to understand the issues and to provide the funds we need to succeed."

NORTH CAROLINA

Diversity, Yes

The Professional Practices Commission (PPC), chaired by NCAE member Tom Blanford, is urging the State Board of Education to do a better job training teachers for the multicultural classroom.

In a report to the State Board, the Commission—which includes seven NCAE members from elementary and secondary schools across the state—outlined crucial steps to address the challenges of diversity.

The report addresses three main topics: what teachers need to know to meet the needs of multicultural student populations; how teachers can acquire these skills and attitudes; and how districts can ensure access to training.

"Changing the content of instructional materials to reflect the contributions of minorities won't meet the needs of the students," says Blanford, a vocational education teacher.

"But education systems dedicated to multiculturalism will, and that's why this commission and its recommendations are so important."

UTAH

Land Grab

The Utah Education Association has gone to court to void a state law that allowed a land developer to buy public school trust lands on the basis of appraised value rather than competitive bidding. UEA claims the developer paid only $1.1 million for land that should have brought more than $10 million.

Allowing this sale, as well as previous sales, UEA contends, shortchanges the schools, which receive money from the school land trust. Trust funds now total about $60 million.

Utah received 5 million acres of school trust lands from the federal government when it became a state in 1896.

Meet:

Carol Moseley Braun

Joe DiDio

New? Yes. Novice? No.

Despite what you may have read, Carol Moseley Braun was no political novice when she beat veteran Illinois Senator Alan Dixon in the primary and went on to win the general election.

A Chicago native and a lawyer by training, Braun served as Cook County Recorder of Deeds for five years and as a member of the Illinois General Assembly for 10.

When, as she says, "the Senate went on television" during the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas hearings, Braun decided to run for national office.

The rest is truly history. She's the first African-American woman to serve in the Senate, and the only African-American serving in the Senate right now.

In the midst of her first hectic days in Washington, Braun found a few minutes to talk to NEA Today *staffer Stefanie Weiss.*

Are you getting tired of people asking you about your feelings as the first Black female senator?
No, no, no. I'm very excited about this. It's a lot of work, and there are a lot of expectations and hopes riding on this office, but I feel up to the job. I'm just going to do my best to make everybody proud for having voted for me.

So now there are six women senators. That's terrific, isn't it?

I'm excited about it, but what difference do you think it'll make?
It energizes the process, brings a whole new set of skills to legislation and to law making and policy making that I don't think have been as evident before now—like the ability to work in bipartisan fashion when we have specific policy goals and the ability to work toward consensus.

As a new member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, what will you do differently from the panel of white men that questioned Anita Hill?
I hope to be able to be a voice for people who might not otherwise be heard. I think that both Dianne [Senator Dianne Feinstein, D-CA] and I bring a different kind of sensitivity to the kinds of issues that get raised in Judiciary.

That won't be easy. Zoe Baird was the first woman to come before your committee.
I thanked Joe Biden for that. He had said to both me and Dianne Feinstein, "Oh, don't worry. Now, with President Clinton, we won't have these controversial nominations. It'll be a piece of cake." Hah!

You're the only single mother in the Senate. How does that affect your position on issues?
I intend to demonstrate a real sensitivity to the kinds of issues that affect women as caregivers. You see, I have an elderly mother who's in a nursing home. So, like many women, I find myself in that generational cross fire of being responsible for my mother on the one hand and my son on the other.

You got involved in education issues as a parent first, right?
Yes. I was involved in the neighborhood, and I wanted to hold a meeting at the school, but the principal said that couldn't be done. After some digging, I discovered that parents' input was almost consistently rejected by the bureaucracy, except on the level of bake sales.

My view was that parents should have a greater advisory role. So when I got elected to the General Assembly, I made education my number one priority. I proposed a bill that would have given parents a greater advisory role.

But the legislation that passed was much tougher. It gave parent and community councils actual veto authority on the budget. They can hire and fire teachers and principals.

Have things gone too far?
In some ways, yes. But I think it came about because the education establishment was so resistant to change and so resistant to bringing parents into the mix and letting them have some role to play.

Overall, I'm pleased that the decision-making process is opening up, allowing more voices—parents' and teachers'—to be heard. As a result, I believe policy direction will make more sense and the schools will improve.

Are you hopeful about the future of urban schools?
Yes, I am—if we take some new directions. People all the time raise the question, "Are you talking about more money or what?" The fact is that the answer to school reform is not necessarily more money, but you certainly have to make the dollar investment if you're going to expect any change.

We've been shortchanging our schools for so long, not only in terms of teacher salaries and class size, but even in terms of the physical structures. Most of these schools were built just after World War II, and it just seems to me that if we're going to begin to make some investment, that's a place to start.

You come to the Senate at the end of the Cold War. How should we as a nation reorder our priorities?
The fact is that in the post-Cold War world, we have to recognize that our national defense is as much predicated on having an educated workforce as it is on having a B-2 bomber. To me, that's just real straightforward.

I think we can be strong militarily and be strong domestically as well, if we simply readjust our sights and reallocate our dollars, which are, in this time of raging deficits, limited. But we certainly have enough room to begin to help provide financial support for education.

How will you get more support for education?
Rest assured, I am determined to get the federal government more involved in the funding of education. One of the things I'm looking at now is the whole concept of having the federal government pick up more of the costs that it shifts onto state and local governments.

For instance, if the federal government assumes some of the costs of just the programs it mandates, that'll lessen the burden on the local property tax and allow more flexibility at the local level for programs and actual student services.

Was education important in your family when you were growing up?
Oh my, yes. My father was a devotee of the classics. He played seven instruments. He spoke several languages. He was a police officer. He later became a corrections officer. He was just kind of an all-around person who had a lot of different interests.

And I think that sparked my thirst for knowledge and for experiences. Just by way of example, we'd go to a different church every Sunday. We'd go to our own church and then to another one.

So by the time I'd grown up, I'd already attended several synagogues, the Baha'i temple, all different kinds of Protestant denominations, as well as Catholic ones. That's the eclectic education he gave us.

When all is said and done, what's the significance of your election?
I'm optimistic that, if nothing else, my election will help to open doors for people—not just for candidates for office, but for voters to recognize that quality does not know gender, does not know race, for people to know that somebody can be good as a legislator, as a senator, without regard for the kind of boxes that separate us.

RESOURCES

TV Tips

Elementary School—*TLC, Tuesdays, 4-5 a.m. ET.* March 9: "Numbers, Shapes, and Things." March 16: "Caterpillars and Other Small Creatures." March 23: "Tales from the Brothers Grimm." March 30: "Stories from Around the World."

Schoolbreak Specials—*CBS, selected Tuesdays. March 9, 4-5 p.m. ET*: "Big Boys Don't Cry." A teen's personal struggle to confront an ugly truth about child sexual abuse in his family. *March 30, 4-6 p.m. ET*: "The Emancipation of Lizzie Stern." A 16-year-old copes with a new step-parent. For a study guide produced byKIDSNET, contact your CBS affiliate.

Shakespeare: The Animated Tales—The Tempest. *HBO, Tuesday, March 9, 5-5:30 p.m. ET.* Marionettes perform the Bard's stormy romantic drama.

Afterschool Special: I Hate the Way I Look—*ABC, Thursday, March 18, 4-5 p.m. ET,* Oprah Winfrey hosts this forum on teenagers' obsession with physcial appearance. For an Afterschool newsletter, contact your ABC affiliate.

Living & Working in Space—*PBS, Wednesday, March 31, 8-9 p.m. ET.* An insightful and humorous depiction of work and play on the space frontier, starring Jaime Escalante and Kathy Bates. For a teacher's guide, call FASE Productions, 818/965-8794.

Great Books—*Learning Channel, sometime in March; check local listings.* Walter Cronkite is executive editor of this series about written works that have shaped civilization.

These listings were provided by KIDSNET, a computerized clearinghouse for children's TV and radio in Washington, D.C.

Teacher TV

Teacher TV continues its spring run of 13 new shows through April 11. Programs air on Sundays, 6-6:30 p.m. ET. The March-April schedule:

March 7: **Teaching the Academically Diverse Classroom.** In the spotlight are successful learning programs for mentally and physically challenged students, a school that encourages different teaching methods for different learning styles, and a school with various ethnic groupings and a K-6 classroom.

March 14: **When Society's Problems Walk in the School Door.** A look at the expanding role of schools in addressing the ills of society. Teachers at one successful school credit cooperative parents and social service agencies.

March 21: **Higher Order Thinking Skills.** Successful strategies teachers use to develop divergent, critical thinkers.

March 28: **The Art of Learning.** A special hour-long program about the arts as a catalyst for education reform. Features include art in an interdisciplinary curriculum, equity and access, art and technology, and art and multicultural appreciation.

April 4: **Standards.** How educators and others are developing new national teaching standards.

April 11: **The ABC's of Getting Resources.** A look at creative, offbeat ways teachers are getting classroom materials and resources.

Take advantage of special savings with NEA & Hertz!

Whether you're planning a family vacation or a relaxing get-away for two, NEA members can save with year-round discounts from Hertz.

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To save all year long, order your NEA/Hertz Discount Card by calling the NEA Member Services Center at 1-800-637-4636 and giving the code, THZ033.

For reservations, call your travel agent or Hertz at 1-800-654-2200.

nea Member Benefits

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IMPORTANT RENTAL INFORMATION
Weekend Rates are available from noon Thursday through noon Sunday. The car must be returned by 11:59 pm Monday. Thursday weekend rentals must be for a minimum of three days.
This offer is available at participating locations in the U.S. (except Manhattan, NY). Advance reservations are required as blackout periods may apply and coupon use may also be limited in some cities at some times, especially during periods of peak demand. This coupon has no cash value, must be surrendered on rental and may not be used with any other CDP#, coupon, discount, rate or promotion. Hertz' rate and rental conditions for the location apply and the car must be returned to that location. Taxes and optional services, such as refueling, are not included and are not subject to discount. Call for details.

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RESOURCES

Free Or Inexpensive

PARENT OUTREACH

Little Beginnings: Starting Your Child on a Lifetime of Learning (about preschoolers) and ***The Little Things Make a Big Difference*** (about school-age children). National Association of Elementary School Principals and World Book Educational Products. Booklets, which are also available in Spanish-language versions, suggest ways parents can help their children get ready for and then succeed in school. About 18 pp. each. Each edition sold in packs of 25. $13.50 per pack ($10 for NAESP members) plus $3 per pack p&h. National Association of Elementary School Principals, Educational Products, 1615 Duke St., Alexandria, VA 22314, 703/684-3345. For free single copies, phone 800/621-8202 or 800/848-8170.

PEDAGOGY

Creating the Teachable Moment. Darlene L. Stewart. Explains how teachers can generate a climate of stability and well-being among students that reduces stress and boredom and encourages achievement. 192 pp. $10.95. From booksellers or from TAB/McGraw Hill (no p&h if prepaid), Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17294-0850, 800/822-8138.

HEALTH

Home Health Packet. Contains a commemorative poster and a nutrition poster, a health report card, and a health passport to encourage children to monitor their health and eating habits. $4 postpaid. American Health Foundation, 1 Dana Rd., Valhalla, NY 10595.

VACATION OPPORTUNITIES

Helping Out in the Outdoors, 1993. American Hiking Society. Lists more than 2,000 volunteer jobs available in national parks and other public lands across the country. 112 pp. $5. AHS/Helping Out, P.O. Box 20160, Washington, DC 20041-2160.

SCIENCE

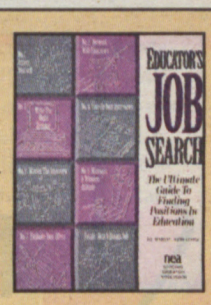
Why? Experiments for the Young Scientist. Dave Prochnow and Kathy Prochnow. Presents more than 40 simple experiments for students 8-13 in six scientific areas: engineering, astronomy, chemistry, meteorology, biology, and physics. 142 pp. $9.95. From booksellers or from TAB/McGraw Hill (no p&h if prepaid), Blue Ridge Summit, PA 17294-0850, 800/822-8138.

PROJECTS

Likeable Recyclables: Creative Ideas for Reusing Bags, Boxes, Cans, and Cartons. Linda Schwartz. Shows how to keep discarded containers out of overcrowded landfills by transforming them into toys, games, and other useful objects. 128 pp. $9.95. To place an order or find a local supplier, phone the publisher, The Learning Works, at 800/235-5767.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Educator's Job Search. Martin Kimeldorf. Land your dream job in education by learning to identify your teaching strengths, investigate the needs of desirable school districts, network to discover job opportunities, write an impressive resume, prepare for interviews, and otherwise organize your job search. 88 pp. Use stock no. 1860-5-10-FF to get the special prepublication price of $11.96, good through March 31 (then $15.95). NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516, 800/229-4200, FAX 203/933-5276.



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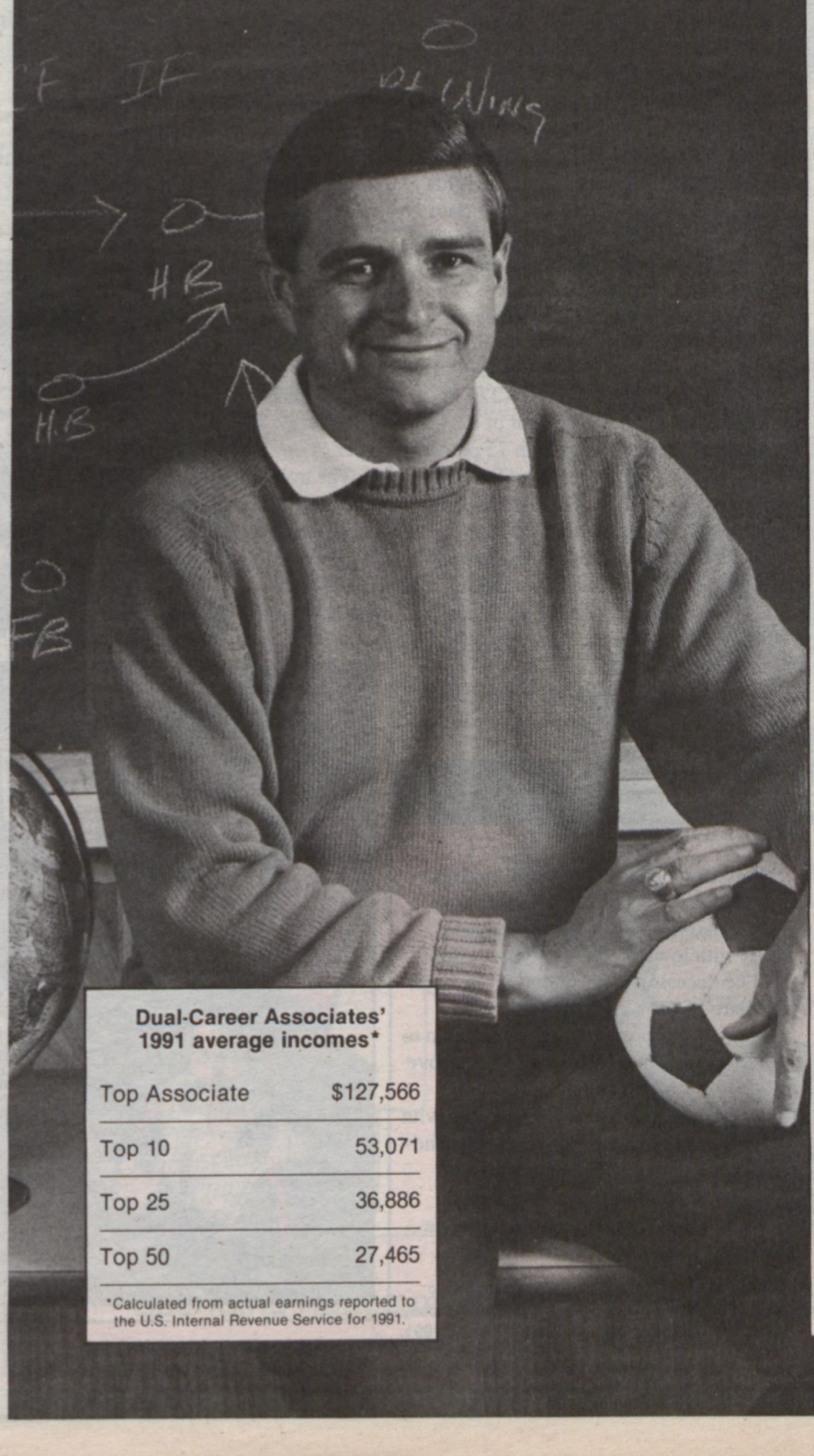

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HIGH FINANCE . . .

SHOWDOWN ON SCHOOL FINANCE

Texas lawmakers have until June 1 to devise an equitable and constitutional system of public school finance—or the courts will shut the schools down.

"We have a joke at the high school," says Jill Graves, president of Association of Brownsville Educators and a teacher at Brownsville's Rivera High School. "It goes: 'We asked the district for pencils, and each teacher got two—one for each semester.'"

In Texas, the clock is ticking on the system of school finance that allows some districts to have VCRs in every classroom, others to distribute pencils in pairs.

Last year a Texas state judge gave the legislature until this June 1 to make school funding equitable and constitutional. This year Texas lawmakers are trying to hammer out a plan that will equalize the dollars available to each of the state's 3.4 million students, no matter which of the state's 1,000 school districts they happen to live in.

Texas isn't the only state with an inequitable funding system—currently courts in nine states have declared state school funding formulas unconstitutional—but Texas is the only one with a June 1 "fix it or shut it down" deadline.

Texas also has more of a fairness problem than most: the state's 10 highest-spending districts spend more than two-and-a-half times as much per pupil as its 10 lowest-spending districts. That puts Texas in a tie with Ohio as the state with the biggest education spending disparities. (See chart next page.)

The disparities in spending come from disparities in wealth—particularly real estate wealth—and they play out in disparities in instructional resources. You can see it happen if you compare property-rich districts—like Alamo Heights near San Antonio—with property-poor districts—such as Edgewood, the original plaintiff in the Texas school finance lawsuit, also near San Antonio.

- Alamo Heights has 13 times as much taxable value per pupil as Edgewood ($461,884 vs. $35,288 in 1990-91).
- Alamo Heights raises $5,223 in revenues per pupil, 92 percent of it locally. In contrast, even with 75 percent state, 9 percent local funding (Texas is already trying to equalize resources), Edgewood brings in only $4,495.
- On the bottom-line measure of instructional expenditures per pupil, Alamo Heights outspends Edgewood by 22 percent ($2,886 vs. $2,359).

Instructional expenditures are what makes student achievement go round. In a study of students in nearly 900 Texas school districts (see box, this page), Harvard professor Ronald Ferguson found that money spent directly for teacher salaries and basic instructional equipment—as opposed to overhead and other noninstructional costs—influences student test scores.

One of the instructional advantages money can buy is experienced teachers. In Edgewood, 37 percent of the teachers have less than five years experience, compared to only 15 percent in Alamo Heights.

"Our salaries are not competitive in the San Antonio area," explains Edgewood Classroom Teachers Association President Manuel Ruiz. "We have lots of faculty turnover every year."

The average teacher salary in Edgewood is $26,276. It's $33,444 in Alamo Heights—and not only because the district has more experienced teachers. Alamo Heights pays more than Edgewood for teachers with the same number of years in the classroom.

Money can equip classrooms. At Faulk Intermediate School in Brownsville, a property-poor district on the Mexican border, classrooms have overhead projectors, and they're beginning to get TVs and VCRs. But the only reason, explains teacher Bea Gutierrez, is because the principal runs a concession stand to pay for them. Gutierrez says teachers volunteer to work at the stand at lunchtime.

Money can facilitate innovation. "I

Porter High in Brownsville has 64 portables.

NEA member Esequiel Lopez, head custodian at Brownsville's Canales Elementary, maintains classrooms in structures originally built to house World War II veterans.

Photographs by Hart Van Denburg

Money Really Does Matter

Researchers have long had trouble proving what seemed obvious: that spending more on schools improves student achievement. Now Ronald Ferguson of Harvard's Kennedy School of Government has the evidence—from a study of nearly 900 districts in Texas.

What's new: Ferguson's finding that differences in school quality account for between a quarter and a third of the differences among districts in students' reading scores. Moreover, rich school districts are able to buy more of the inputs that are associated with higher student test scores—specifically, teachers' literacy, teachers' years of experience, teachers' advanced educational levels (master's degree), and smaller classes.

Ferguson believes his study has three implications for school finance reform:

- Salary differentials favoring districts with lower socioeconomic status will be necessary if each district is to get its share of the best teachers.
- Pushing average class sizes down to the low 20s (but not below) will improve student test scores.
- Forcing all districts to comply with a uniform set of spending rules or spending levels won't work. One of several reasons is that districts have different demands on their resources (for maintenance or transportation, for instance).

Source: Ronald F. Ferguson, "Paying for Public Education: New Evidence on How and Why Money Matters," *Harvard Journal on Legislation* 28:2, 1991.

. . . HIGH STAKES

would like to try cooperative learning with my students,'' says Delia Gutierrez, a Brownsville sixth grade teacher, ''but my room is in a portable and there isn't enough space for groups.''

The case for spending more nearly equal amounts on different schools is clearly urgent—not least because low-wealth, low-spending districts are much more likely than high-wealth, high-spending districts to serve minority students, who may need more services, such as bilingual education. Edgewood students are almost all Mexican American; Alamo Heights is 70 percent white.

There are only two ways to equalize spending, according to Jack Kelly, school finance expert at the Texas State Teachers Association: ''Re-sort the money you have or raise more money and equalize at a higher level.''

Usually the two are tried together, since pure re-sorting—taking from the rich to help the poor, Robin Hood-style—is politically unpopular.

All the proposals in the Texas legislature this spring are variants of a re-sorting strategy known as ''recapture.'' The idea behind recapture is to limit the ability of property-rich districts to spend indefinitely from their own revenues.

Recapture makes such districts ante up the ''excess'' they collect over some predetermined amount and allow it to be ''recaptured''—usually at the state level—for distribution to poorer districts.

Critics say recapture is another word for state take-over of the property tax—with all the implications that has for the American tradition of local control of schools.

In 1991, a judge in Kansas prepared the way for a state takeover of the property tax there by arguing that ''money raised by school districts through 'local' taxation is still state money.''

The Kansas legislature followed up oby setting a uniform statewide school expenditure rate of $3,600 per pupil financed by a uniform statewide property tax rate of $32 per $1,000 of assessed value. Yield differences are evened out by recapture.

Leveling up—the other half of Kelly's equalization formula—is essential to any solution to the school finance problem that's acceptable to Texas educators.

For TSTA president Ollie Besteiro, shutting down the schools isn't even the worst case scenario. ''My fear is not that schools will close,'' Besteiro explains. ''It's that the legislature will pass something that's constitutional and equitable—but not at a funding level that assures everyone access to quality education.''

''At some point,'' she continues, ''the elected state leadership has to deal with the fact that the tax structure, based as it is on a state sales tax and local property taxes, is regressive.'' The state has no income tax.

''But with elections coming up next year, the temptation to pass some kind of Band-Aid tax increase may be overwhelming,'' Besteiro concedes.

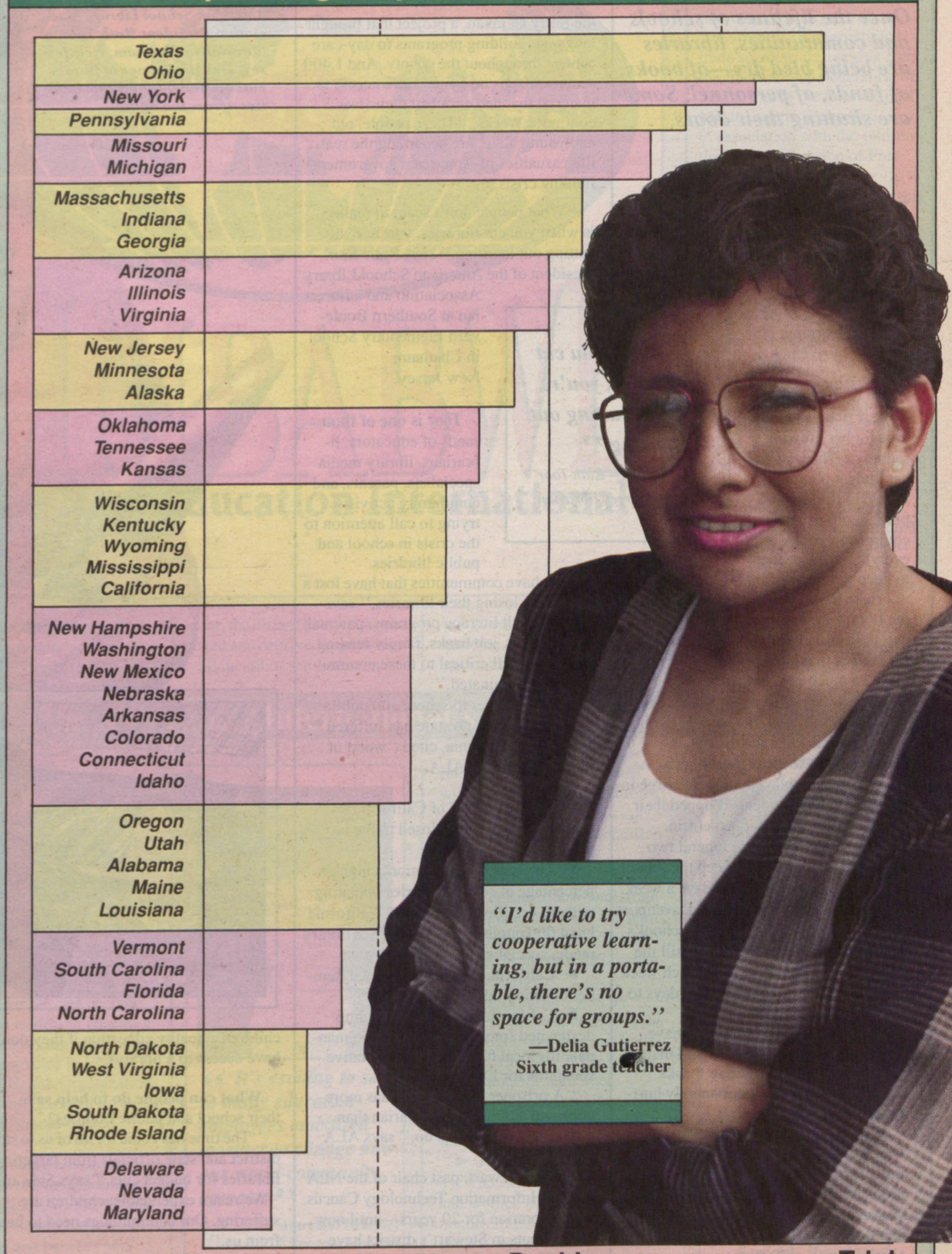
Not to mention that Texas began 1993 with a forecast that revenues would fall short of needs by at least $3 billion.

Texas can still avoid shutting down its schools. A constitutional amendment that legalizes recapture will be on the statewide ballot in May, giving the legislature—in session untill May 31—just enough time to agree on a recapture plan if it passes, something else if it doesn't. The final test: a court finding that the new school finance system is both equitable and constitutional.

Holding your breath?

—Nancy R. Needham

School Spending Disparities: The National Picture



Spending Ratios of High- to Low-Spending Districts, By State

Note: Ratio is the average expenditure of the 10 highest-spending districts in the state divided by the average expenditure of the 10 lowest-spending districts in 1986-87.
Source: Congressional Research Service in Educational Testing Service, *The State of Inequality*, 1991.

BUDGET CUTBACKS

CLOSING THE BOOK On School Libraries

Once the lifelines of schools and communities, libraries are being bled dry—of books, of funds, of personnel. Some are shutting their doors.

For 15 years, Marianne Fricke's job as a librarian at Central High School in Corinth, Maine, a small town north of Bangor, was a joy. "I was excited to be helping students discover the magic of learning, of reading, of researching."

But for the past two years, Fricke's job has brought her growing sadness as she watched her budget plummet from $15,000 for supplies, audiovisual equipment, books—everything she needed to keep the library running—to $750.

> ***"When you cut libraries, you're really cutting out learning."***
>
> *—Ruth Toor*
> *New Jersey librarian*

Fricke hasn't bought a new book for the library in two years, and her periodicals collection has dwindled from 30 magazines to eight. Even the job Fricke loves so much is in jeopardy.

In Monrovia, California, the students and teachers of Santa Fe Middle School held a funeral when the district announced plans to close their library. As the school band played a funeral dirge in the background, students dropped their favorite books into an open coffin.

Santa Fe's schoolwide funeral two years ago was enough to keep the school library open—but only two days a week. Twenty-year veteran Charlotte Davenport retired from her position as the school's librarian at that time, but she's still the only librarian Santa Fe's got. Each week Davenport volunteers those two days to keep the library open.

That's the only time students have access to the library's books and materials. "How can this continue," asks Davenport, "without permanently hurting our children?"

At public libraries, the situation is even worse, says Ann Weeks, executive director of the American Library Association (ALA): "In 1990, the Worcester, Massachusetts, public library system shut down six of its seven branches. In Austin, Texas, collections were so outdated that one library still had a copy of *Asbestos, the Magic Mineral,* on its shelves.

"In Atlanta, Georgia, 30,000 at-risk children no longer receive visits from the Story Caravan, a project that brought language-building programs to day-care centers throughout the county. And 1,400 senior citizens no longer have access to material that had enriched their lives," continues Weeks. "These people, old and young alike, are becoming the real-life casualties of America's government funding crisis."

"What people don't seem to realize is when you cut libraries, you're really cutting out learning," says Ruth Toor, president of the American School Library Association and a librarian at Southern Boulevard Elementary School in Chatham, New Jersey.

Toor is one of thousands of educators, librarians, library media specialists, parents, and community activists trying to call attention to the crisis in school and public libraries.

"We have communities that have lost a lifeline by losing their libraries," says Toor. "Adult literacy programs, parental involvement, job banks, family reading programs—all critical to these communities, all eliminated."

When it comes to school and public library cutbacks, no state has suffered more than California, cited "worst of the worst" by the ALA.

A few facts:

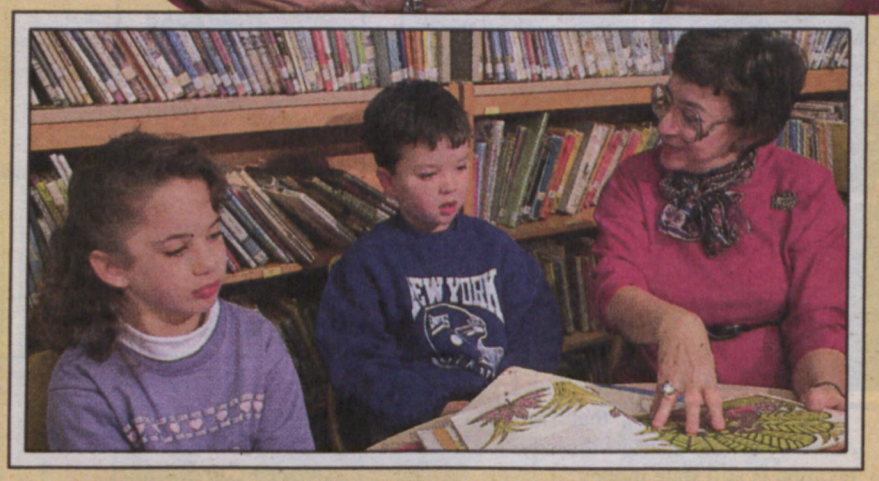
- More than half of California's school libraries have closed in the last decade.
- The state has the nation's highest percentage of school libraries operating without certified library staff. California has 4,000 pupils for every certified library media specialist.
- California ranks 43rd in total number of school library books.
- California has no state funding designated for school libraries, no mandate for local funding, no quantitative standards for libraries.

"A prisoner in California has more access to a library and librarian than public school students do," says ALA Director Weeks.

Eunice Stewart, past chair of the NEA Library Information Technology Caucus, was a librarian for 20 years—until now. Budget cuts in Stewart's district have forced her out of the library and into a world history classroom.

"My school district eliminated all 16 of its secondary librarian positions. I can no longer do the work I love so much," says Stewart. "How can we offer our children a quality education if they don't have access to a library?"

American School Library Association President Ruth Toor, a librarian in Chatham, New Jersey, sees the impact of library cuts on students and communities across the nation.



What can people do to help save their school and public libraries?

"The time has come for all of us to stop district and state officials from targeting libraries for budget cuts," says Stewart. "We're not expendable: children are suffering. Our communities need to hear from us."

The American Library Association is organizing a nationwide campaign to support school and public libraries, to begin with National Library Week, April 18-24. And Congress is considering the NEA-backed Elementary and Secondary Library Media Act, designed to create an education resources division within the Department of Education and provide federal funds for the nation's libraries.

"What's even more critical is action at the state and local level, because that's where most of the funding has to come from," says New Jersey's Ruth Toor. "We must make people understand what's at stake, and stop officials from balancing their budgets at the expense of learning."

"We can't afford to wait," says Eunice Stewart. "We've lost too many jobs and too many libraries. The time for action is now."

—Anita Merina

INTERNATIONAL

ANGUILLA TO ZIMBABWE

The New Education International

On the Pacific island nation of Tonga, says primary teacher Emosi Alatini, 40 students routinely pack into classrooms. The children who can't afford to buy their textbooks go without.

In Bangladesh, teacher Shahzada Nurui Ameri is tired of government rhetoric about the importance of education. Many schools still don't have any benches for students or chalk and blackboards for teachers.

In Scotland, notes geography teacher John Small, teachers are continually fighting top-down British government mandates. The latest battle is over a government plan that would segregate non-university bound students into a dead-end track.

In their nations, these three educators are leaders of the unions that represent teachers and other education employees. Late in January, in Stockholm, Sweden, these educators took a giant step on the *international* scene. They joined with more than 700 other educators from over 120 nations—including 81 NEA members from the United States—to create a new world organization of teachers and school staff.

This new organization—the Education International—unites more than 240 national educator unions and professional associations, with a combined total membership of over 20 million elementary, secondary, college, and university faculty and staff.

The first president of the new Education International (EI) is Mary Hatwood Futrell, the Virginia teacher who served as NEA president from 1983 to 1989. Current NEA President Keith Geiger was elected in Stockholm to the Education International's inaugural executive board.

The Education International, Futrell pledged at the group's founding Congress in Stockholm, will be a forceful advocate for social and economic justice.

"We cannot be silent," Futrell told the Congress, "while our planet is home to one soldier per 43 people and to one doctor per 1,030 people, while more than 900 million adults—two-thirds of them women—are illiterate, while governments around the globe seek to escape the results of their own foolish fiscal priorities by advocating the privatization of education."

The founding of the Education International, delegates agreed, could hardly have come at a more critical time.

"Intolerance is on the rise," notes Fred van Leeuwen, the new EI's secretary general. "The gap between rich and poor, the distance between privileged and deprived is growing."

Education, van Leeuwen points out, remains the best antidote to the poverty and ancient hatreds that continue to make the world such a dangerous place.

The new EI, adds van Leeuwen, will champion every child's right to free, public education.

In that effort, the EI will work closely with other world trade union organizations. The Education International is an "international trade secretariat," a multi-nation grouping of education employee organizations.

Currently 16 international trade secretariats, ranging from the International Federation of Journalists to the International Metalworkers Federation, work in association with the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

The EI's association with this confederation will help enlist the 105 million working people IFCTU represents on behalf of campaigns to improve the lives of children and enhance the status of education employees.

The new Education International replaces the World Confederation of Organizations of the Teaching Profession and three other international and regional educator groups. The EI's two affiliates in the United States are NEA and the American Federation of Teachers.

Within the EI, each national organization remains autonomous. The EI cannot direct any member organization to do anything. What it can—and will—do is help educators around the world address the challenges they so often share.

The Education International's First Action Agenda

The Education International, delegates emphasized throughout the founding Stockholm Congress, will walk on two legs: a trade union leg and a professional leg.

The Education International will focus its initial efforts in seven prime areas.

► *Improving the quality of education:* The EI will help education employees become worldwide leaders in education reform by working to give them a significant voice in UNESCO, the World Health Organization, and other international forums that debate school-related issues.

► *Upgrading education employee working conditions and compensation:* The EI will circulate comparative research on salaries and benefits and promote alternatives to budget policies and privatization plans that undercut public education.

► *Fighting for adequate education funding:* In the developing world, poor nations slashed their education budgets by 25 percent in the 1980s to get debt relief from international financial institutions. The EI will battle against international aid plans that make reducing public expenditures a condition of receiving assistance.

"It's exciting to see so many education employees mobilized together to change how our world community operates."

Margaret Dempsey
Elementary teacher
Toronto, Canada

► *Sharing curriculum:* The EI will define educational strategies to combat racism, antisemitism, and xenophobia. The EI will also promote AIDS prevention pedagogy.

► *Safeguarding human rights:* In many countries, basic union rights are systematically denied. The EI will file formal complaints through international agencies and focus public condemnation on nations that violate human rights.

► *Fighting for gender equality:* The EI will insist that girls and women have the same opportunities as boys and men, at all levels of education and in unions representing educators.

► *Building stronger educator organizations:* Through training and aid programs, the EI will help educator unions in the developing world become effective advocates for their members and public education.

"The Education International can be a unifying force on behalf of all the children of the world."

Edith Cannon
Chapter 1 teacher
Randolph, Massachusetts

—Sam Pizzigati

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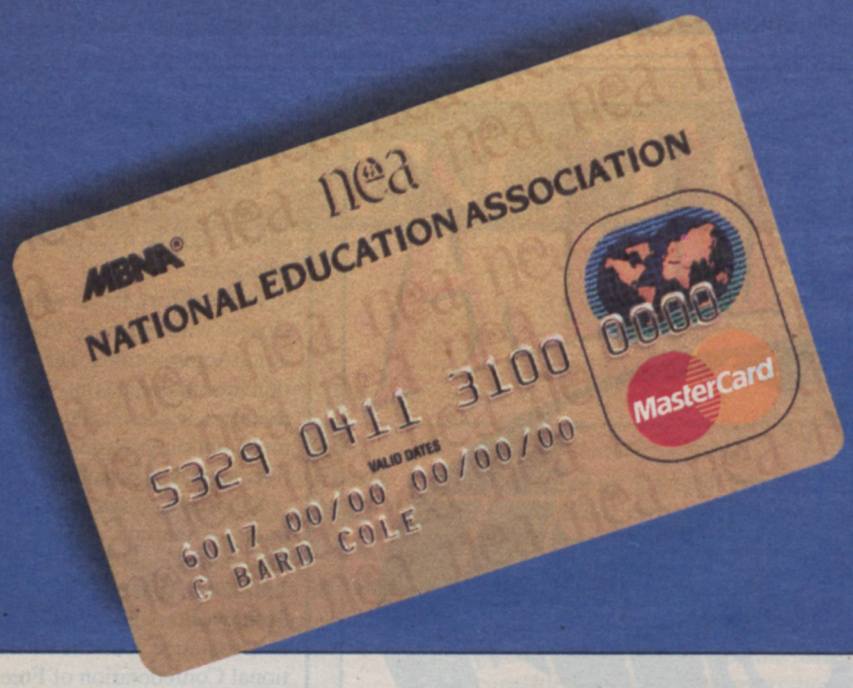

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Years There _____ Annual Salary*$ _____

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Health

Information about health factors that affect the way students learn.

Dr. Lani Smith Majer is director of the health program in the Annapolis, Maryland, schools. She represents the American School Health Association on the National Asthma Education Program Coordinating Committee. She's cared for children and adolescents with asthma for 16 years.

Why is asthma in the news?
We in the medical profession are concerned that people with asthma are still having severe problems and still dying despite the advances we've made in medical management of the disease.

The National Center for Health Statistics found that during the 1980s, asthma deaths of young people aged 5 to 34 increased by 6.2 percent annually, reversing a decade or so of decline.

And asthma continues to be the number one chronic illness causing school absences. A study just published in *Pediatrics* found that children with asthma are absent from school three times as much as well children.

What exactly is asthma?
Asthma is a lung condition that causes episodic breathing problems, like coughing, wheezing, chest tightness, and shortness of breath. It is common and chronic and can be life threatening.

How many children have asthma?
More than 3 million—6.1 percent of all children under 18. In each classroom of 30 children, two are likely to have asthma.

Biologically, what happens during an asthma attack?
Well, in normal breathing, the airways are open, allowing air to move freely in and out of the lungs. But during an asthma episode, the muscles around the airways tighten, the airways swell, and too much mucus is produced. This leads to a narrowing of the airways—and breathing problems.

What causes asthma?
We don't know yet. We do know that asthma can't be caught like a cold or the flu. But while anyone's airways might react to a powerful irritant like smoke, children with asthma—and chronically inflamed airways—can react very easily to common things.

Such as?
Furred or feathered pets, pollens or molds, dust mites, cockroach droppings, cold air, strong smells, household sprays, and tobacco smoke, to name a few. It's also true that asthma attacks can be triggered in some children by exercise, colds or flu, even laughing or crying hard.

Can children with asthma lead normal lives?
Yes. Asthma can't be cured, but it can be controlled. With the right treatment, most children can participate in normal activities, including sports; sleep uninterrupted through the night; have few asthma episodes; and have few or even no side effects from medicines.

How is asthma controlled?
Because every student's asthma is different, youngsters' treatment plans will also differ. All children with asthma attempt to avoid or control the things that bring on episodes.

For most children, asthma management includes several kinds of medicine prescribed by doctors—"Bronchodilators" to open airways and relieve breathing problems during an asthma episode and anti-inflammatories taken on a daily basis to prevent symptoms.

Can kids with asthma monitor their own condition?
Yes. A simple, inexpensive device called a peak flow meter measures how well air is moving through the airways. It can help children monitor asthma and may provide early warning of asthma trouble.

How can children prepare for an asthma emergency?
Students' families and doctors must develop an asthma management plan that says specifically what the student needs to do to control his or her asthma.

A copy of this plan should be put with the student's medical records. All school staff should be able to get a copy of the plan.

What should a school employee do if a student has a severe asthma attack?
Take it seriously. Call 911.

How can school personnel help?
School staff can work to keep the classroom free of things that might bring on a student's asthma episodes. Teachers can try to substitute reptiles for mice in a science experiment or schedule recess for the warmest time of day.

What about school nurses and nurse's aides?
They can help identify students with asthma and monitor their care while they're in school. Nurses should make sure a written asthma action plan is in place for each student who needs one.

In addition to helping individual children control their asthma, school nurses can provide in-service training for school staff. They should cover what happens during an asthma episode and how to deal with it, how to help students avoid things that may trigger episodes, and how students should use peak flow meters and medicines.

If exercise can bring on an attack, what's a physical education teacher to do?
The key here is to individualize—to know what works or doesn't work for each student. For some, exercise may not be a problem at all. Others may need to take medications before exercising.

Do children grow out of asthma?
Not as a general rule. But many asthmatics tend to do a better job of controlling their asthma as they get older.

RESOURCES

- National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Asthma Education Program, 7200 Wisconsin Ave., P.O. Box 329, Bethesda, MD 20814-4820, 301/951-3260.
- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, 1125 15th St., N.W., Suite 502, Washington, DC 20005, 800/7-ASTHMA.
- American Lung Association, 1740 Broadway, 14th Floor, New York, NY 10019-4374, 212/315-8700, or check your phone book for local chapter.

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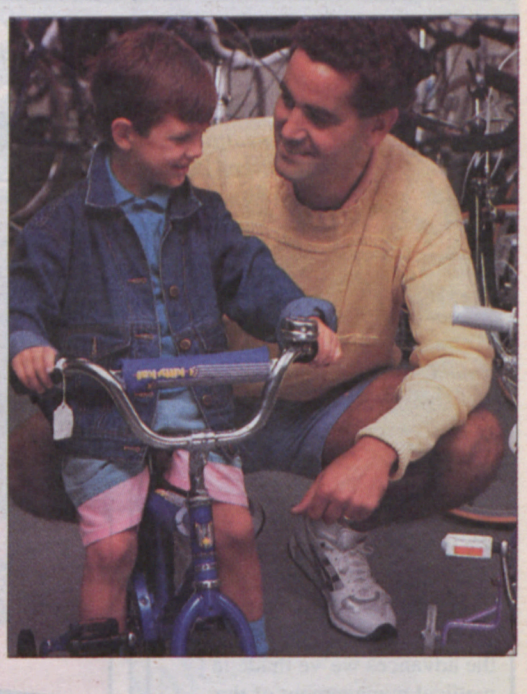

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Depositor

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Depositor

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Home Phone Business Phone

ACCOUNT TYPE

(Please check one.)

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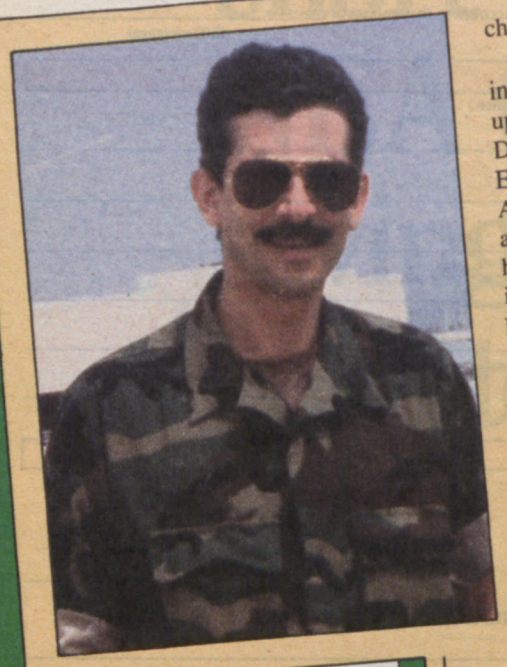

Tinker, Teacher, Soldier, Spy

Chattanooga math teacher **Andres Akhdary's** itinerary in the past three years reads like a lively spy thriller.

As an assistant attache in the U.S. Naval Reserves and a United Nations intelligence operative, Akhdary saw firsthand the "conniving and deceitful" character of Saddam Hussein.

Akhdary's travels began in 1990, when he was called up to serve in Operation Desert Shield. As a native Egyptian, he knows the Arabic language and culture, and he was selected to handle highly sensitive intelligence for the United Nations.

During one of three tours with the U.N., Akhdary's postwar search for Hussein's nuclear arsenal landed him among the famous busful of U.N. weapons inspectors detained in an Iraqi parking lot last year.

"We'd found materials that we by law should have taken with us," Akhdary explains. "The Iraqis refused to let us leave with these materials, so we got locked in a power struggle."

Akhdary and the rest of the U.N. contingent were forced to stay in their bus in scorching heat for days, eating only "MRE's" ("Meals Ready to Eat," often called "Meals Rejected by Everyone") until the dispute was settled.

"Still, it's really great," notes Akhdary, "to be able to say that you did something that will make the world a better place."

The Grievance Guys

Rick Davidson

Grievance processing is a family tradition in central New Hampshire, where **Chuck Brooks** (left) chairs the grievance committee for the Conway Education Association—and brother **Allen Brooks** *is* the grievance committee for the Gorham Teachers Association.

"I'd hate to complain about what's happening and not take any ownership of the problems," explains Chuck. "When I was local president, a grievance came up and we had no standing grievance committee, so I handled it. Next year I decided to be grievance chair instead of president."

"I'm grievance chair because nobody else was going to do it," says Allen. "Last year there were a lot of grievances—after I became chair I handled three and almost did another.

"The number of grievances concerned the school board. This year we have a new superintendent and a new building principal, and things have calmed down quite a bit. Now the school board wants a communications committee between teachers and board so we can communicate before a grievance begins."

"I like to facilitate members processing their own grievances," says Chuck. "When someone comes to me, I'll say, 'Tonight you look in the contract and I'll look in the contract, and let's touch base tomorrow and see what's specifically being violated here.'"

"My brother and I talk about grievances every time we get together," notes Allen. "We ask each other, 'What are you grieving now? How's it going?'"

Minnesota Education Association

Teacher Takes a Flyer

They come battery-operated, scented, and dogbite-proof. New Energizer bunnies? No. Frisbees. And whether they're six-ounce monsters or small enough to fit in the hand of a Barbie doll, Stewartville, Minnesota, teacher **Larry Stacy** collects them.

The speech-language pathologist and teacher of the gifted and talented has collected over 1,000 frisbees, and the collection is growing exponentially—500 frisbees in the first 13 years, 500 in the next four years, and over 200 last year.

What do you do with 1,000+ frisbees? Stacy displays 160 of them. Some he uses on the playing field; others he's got in the classroom or boxed in the storeroom.

In his gifted and talented classes, Stacy uses frisbees to exercise students' higher order thinking skills, such as analysis of aerodynamics. In his language-impaired classes, Stacy uses frisbees that picture popular characters, such as the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, to stimulate class participation.

On the home front, Stacy jokes, "I'm looking forward to the day my kids move out, so I can turn their rooms into a frisbee museum."

No Strings

Richard Nowitz

"It's been exciting to watch this tremendous creativity unfolding over the years," says elementary p. e. teacher **Barbara Blaise.** "Now I mostly just say things like 'Great job, Chris, how does this work?'"

At 16, Chris Webb creates remote-controlled puppets and similar surprises. But when he came to Shelburne (Vermont) Middle School as a fourth grader, Blaise spotted his creativity right away.

"Over the years several of us kept pushing him to keep developing in new directions," says Blaise. "He always loved to draw. Then, when he was going into the ninth grade, he wanted to do musical projects with human-sized puppets. So I helped with that.

"From there on it got more technical. Jim Henson was his idol."

Webb and his friends at Champlain Valley Union High School write fantasy stories for the puppets to perform, like *The Haunted Forest,* a fundraiser for the Audubon Society. But they still get a chance to improvise.

"Often," notes Blaise, "things go wrong and they have to ad-lib."

Don Peterson

Nature's Knowledge

The way Virginia high school teacher **Lanny Lambdin** describes it, he's killing two birds with one stone. Except that Lambdin's not killing birds at all, but preserving their habitat while he offers a natural learning center for local students of all ages.

The outdoor nature center, laboratory, and nature trail are located in the wetlands near Heritage High School in Lynchburg, Virginia. Lambdin, a Heritage High School science teacher, is working with environmentalists, college teachers, and local community organizations to complete the partially developed nature trail and set up identification stations for small mammals, birds, and reptiles.

"Many of our students come from the inner city and have never experienced the beauty of nature hikes, the wonder of spotting a heron looking for fish," Lambdin explains. "This lab, open to classes at all levels, will give these children that excitement.

"At the same time," says Lambdin, "students will learn just how precious our environment is and what an important role they can play in preserving it." The nature trail and outdoor laboratory are scheduled to open in May.

Alaska Education Association

Calling Mr. Greeley

Used to be, the only way folks could reach **Mac Greeley** was to call the town's only phone—on this 200-foot-tall spruce tree— and hope someone walking by would hear it ringing.

The phone company brought residential service to Myers Chuck, Alaska, a few weeks ago. Now NEA members can call Greeley, who's president of the Teachers' Education Association, Southeast, at home or school.

Greeley is the only teacher at Myers Chuck School. His five students range in age from 10 to 16.

"Life here in the bush is vastly different from the norm," acknowledges Greeley, who came to rural Alaska from Washington State three years ago. "Our nemeses aren't drugs or gangs, but isolation and the elements."

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TFA033

Innovation

How NEA members are changing the way schools work

Bill Hurley

Student teacher Cheryl Lupnow paints a cardinal on third grader Jason Schuster's face during Fine Arts Week.

A Little Community With Big Ideas

In January, the Marshall, Wisconsin, school district opened a $2.7 million Early Learning Center. But that's just one part of its 'Marshall Plan' for restructuring.

The wheels of change do not turn slowly in this rural town. Two years ago, the people of Marshall, Wisconsin (population 2,600), started talking about major school reform. Today, school reform is a way of life.

"We've found that change is good and exciting," says NEA member Linda Dirks, a 19-year veteran kindergarten teacher. "We've had positive results and better communication, and we're all working together."

The Marshall Plan is the instrument that helped the community envision the future they wanted for their schools. The Plan is continuously evolving, but the question that drives it has always been the same: *How can we better reach young learners?*

The short answer: "early intervention." That means connecting with families as early as possible and involving the community.

"I think family and home involvement creates a good bond between the community and the school," explains Dirks. "When you encourage parents to participate in setting the outcomes and goals of their children's education, you get everyone pulling together."

Superintendent John Benson was a driving force behind the Marshall Plan. Benson talked with community members about the village partnership and the important roles they would play.

Once the overall plan was firmed up, so were the strategies to achieve it: building an early learning center, writing an individual learning plan for each child, grouping primary students with the same teacher for three years, linking students with adult mentors, extending half-day kindergarten to a full day, and replacing teacher evaluations with professional improvement plans developed by each teacher.

Today, most of the strategies are in place, and so are the physical structures: a media center; a multicultural enrichment center—with the major focus on the Hispanic community, which makes up 10 percent of the district's population; a family resource center; a computer lab for parents, teachers, and students; a Head Start classroom; a before- and after-school child care center; a play area; and office space for community social service agencies. Future plans call for establishment of a health facility within the center.

Where did a community of 2,000 get the money to do all this?' Marshall did get outside help: a $650,000 grant from RJR Nabisco's Next Century Schools program. But Marshall educators say the schools would have changed even without the grant—just not as fast.

So what's next for this forward-looking school system? Right now teams of community members, parents, administrators, and teachers are getting preliminary training in site-based decision making.

And school staff are looking at the latest classroom research to see what other new ideas they might want to try. Two years ago, teachers instituted the whole language approach. This year the district's offering day care. The innovations just keep on coming—all of them supported by parents who are seeing their children perform better in school.

"Actually," says Dirks, "parents have become our biggest advocates in the community, and everyone's talking about the good job we're doing."

—Karen Zauber

Around and About

In Lovell, Wyoming, they've cooked up a new class that combines home economics and physical science. But don't mistake this entree for an appetizer. This course is purely academic. Lovell High School teachers have prepared a project-oriented, outcome-based course in food science. The class has been so popular (enrollment has tripled in the three years it's been offered) that they're whipping up another course. This one will include internships in work settings. The success of this experiment in curriculum integration has inspired a half dozen other Wyoming schools to create similar courses ... Staff at Kimball Elementary in **Seattle, Washington**, spent funds raised through a district bond election on $54,000 worth of computers and related equipment. But they credit NEA's Technology for Teaching Project for getting them off to a good start. The Project is a team effort where teachers, students, and parents learn together and from each other.Five Kimball staff members took training last summer, and they're already seeing how much technology is enhancing teaching, learning, and assessment at all grade levels ... NEA's newest Learning Lab—**the Jefferson County, West Virginia, school district**—is a well-known leader in fulfilling state mandates for site-based decision making. Each school is required to have both a faculty senate with authority to fund staff development and a 10-member improvement council that includes teachers and a principal, support person, parent, non-parent community resident, and school business partner. Jefferson County has taken each of these to the county level: a "super senate" coordinates staff development and another team sets up site-based decision making.

—K. Z.

TRENDS

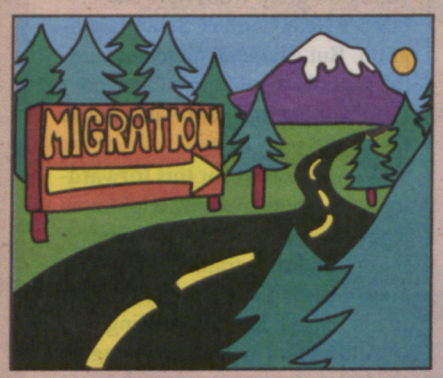
On the Move

The West and Northwest are growing attractions for people on the move, says the latest migration study put together by a moving company, Allied Van Lines. Allied ranks the states by the proportion of Allied moves that are inbound and outbound.

In 1991, for the fourth straight year, Washington, D.C., had the highest proportion of inbound moves.

Among the states, Oregon attracted the greatest percentage of inbound migrants among those who moved with Allied. Next came Montana, Nevada, Alaska, Washington, Colorado, Maine, Georgia, and North Carolina.

The state where the largest proportion of moves was outbound is North Dakota, where 65 percent of migrants headed for other states. Close behind was New York; then came Connecticut, New Jersey, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Michigan, California, Illinois, and Oklahoma.



Arts=Smarts

Art education is receiving new recognition as a stimulus to academic achievement. "Art education is as fundamental to personal development as training in mathematics, language, and science," says a study by Los Angeles' Getty Center for Education in the Arts, reported in the newsletter *Education Today*.

The College Entrance Examination Board found that students with more than four years of arts and music scored 34 points better on the verbal SATs and 18 points better on the math SATs than those who'd taken a year or less.

Education Today also notes further studies showing that when high school students with no expressed interest in art studied sculpture and architecture, their understanding of geometry improved significantly.

Hot Lines: Not For Homework Only

In 17 communities across Tennessee, parents can reach out via First Tennessee Bank's voice-mail system to get the scoop on their kids' school happenings.

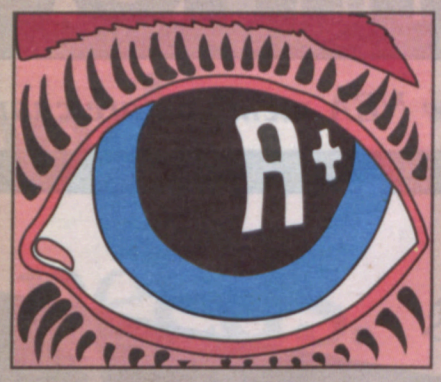
Between 5 p.m. and 7:30 a.m., parents can call the bank chain's communications system to get messages about school life. The news about homework, lesson plans, report cards, field trips is recorded by their children's teachers or by principals, coaches, or other school personnel. Teachers can update their messages daily from any touchtone phone.

The "Lesson Line" service, aimed at increasing parental involvement in the schools, is available to the parents of 466,000 students at 802 schools.

Eyes on the Prize

Taking a lesson from business, some schools are providing tangible incentives for kids to get good grades or simply show up.

The Pittsburgh-area Butler County Area Vocational-Technical School holds daily, monthly, and annual drawings for rewards that range from fast-food dinners (for being in school during the daily



drawing) to automobiles (students get a raffle ticket for each month of perfect attendance and each A).

Among the biggest incentive programs is one from the Renaissance Education Foundation in Minneapolis that has 3,000-plus participating schools handing out fast-food coupons, free records, and cars.

At Butler the proportion of students with perfect attendance rose 86 percent in 1991-92. "There's a sense of hopelessness in society for kids," one Butler official explains. "If we've got the kids here, we can teach them."

Adds one student: "It seems like that's the way to go, to kind of bribe kids into coming."

Health Care/Kid Care

Safe Kids, headed by former Surgeon General Everett C. Koop, is pressing hard for greater educational efforts and tougher laws to reduce the number of accidental injuries to children.

More than 8,000 kids up to age 14 are killed each year, says Safe Kids, and 50,000 are permanently disabled. And, though many parents fear their kids will be hurt in violent incidents, there's a much greater risk that kids will be injured by choking, drowning, poisoning, falls, traffic accidents, and firearms.

Safe Kids wants more attention paid to accident awareness and prevention.

Home Alone

At least five hours a day—some 40 percent of a young adolescent's waking time—are discretionary time, and that's not good, says the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. The Council's report *A Matter of Time: Risk and Opportunity in the Nonschool Hours* estimates that half of these 10- to 15-year-olds will be damaged in some way.

Many young adolescents spend their free time watching television or in drug use, sex, gang activity, and violence. They have few constructive alternatives.

"What happens to young adolescents during this period of critical transition can determine their futures," says David A. Hamburg, Carnegie Corporation president and Council chair. "They need safe places to go and a sense of belonging to a valued group."

The report notes that low-income kids, urban and rural, are the least likely to be reached by community youth organizations, and that too many such organizations aren't responding to the needs of young adolescents.

The report is available for $13 from the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 2400 N St. N.W., 6th Floor, Washington, DC 20037-1153.

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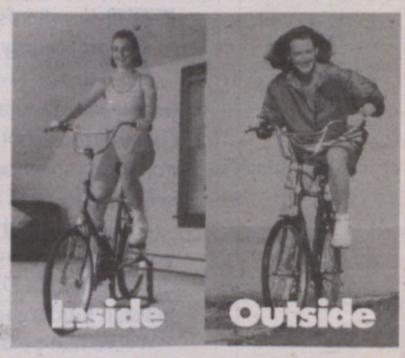

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LOOKING BACK

Fighting Violence

Joe Di Dio

In a continuing effort to fight the rising tide of school violence (cover story, February 1993), NEA President Keith Geiger has called for action at the local, state, and federal levels to ensure that America's public schools become safe havens for children.

"America has become a dangerous place for children," President Geiger told reporters during a January press conference. "The violence we see on the news and in our neighborhoods has spilled over into the one place above all others where children should be safe—our schools."

Lyndhurst (California) High School student Eddie Hicks (above) told reporters he'd been held at gunpoint during an eight-hour siege in which four students were killed and nine were wounded. "It's about time schools were safe," said Hicks. NEA advocates a Violence Free Schools Act providing local education agencies with federal grants beginning fiscal year 1994.

Critical Care

School-based health clinics are well-known—and well-praised—for serving all kinds of student health needs ("Where Does It Hurt?" November 1991).

But school-based clinics can also play a critical role in an emergency. In a recent issue of *PTA Today*, Los Angeles parent Maria Arana, once a skeptic about such clinics, lauded the work of Los Angeles High School's school-based clinic during last year's riots.

"During the riots, the school-based clinic at Los Angeles High demonstrated its readiness to deal with the real issues that the school district is too busy to handle or simply cannot deal with," says Arana.

"Korean students who were beaten during the riots were treated and counseled by the clinic staff. And clinic educators and counselors also provided critical counseling services for traumatized teens and provided referrals in the community for emergency care for parents as well as teachers."

Arana also praised the school clinic for helping students deal with alcoholism, sexual abuse, and HIV/AIDS. And she singled out the school clinics for providing free services such as immunizations, physical examinations, and counseling to her two daughters and other students.

Fatal Attraction

Two recent reports have warned of the deadly impact of tobacco on the health of children ("Lives up in Smoke," Student Health, October 1992).

The EPA recently released its findings on the dangers of secondhand smoke and warned of the harmful effects of secondhand smoke on kids.

And a recent report by the U.S. Surgeon General shows an increase in the use of chewing tobacco and snuff by teenagers, an increase that may lead to an epidemic of oral cancer.

The report, *Spit Tobacco and Youth,* shows that 20 percent of high school boys interviewed had used chewing tobacco in the preceding 30 days. And boys aged 16 to 19 are twice as likely to use snuff as men aged 50 and over. This despite the fact that every state but Montana prohibits the sale of tobacco to minors.

Tobacco's deadly appeal is a principal topic of a new program by the Center for Media and Values in Los Angeles.

The video, *Fatal Attraction: The Selling of Addiction,* offers workshops that show how tobacco and alcohol advertisers target the young.

Joe Di Dio

Keyed In

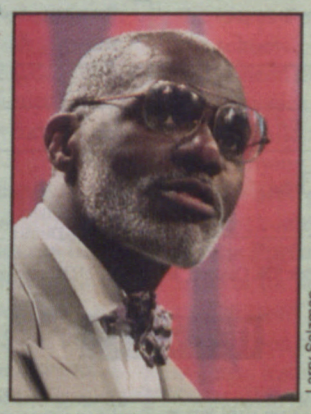
Indianapolis' Key school, the subject of *NEA Today's* September 1990 cover story, continues to draw media attention as an innovative institution that works.

The Key school has been featured in national magazines and The Learning Channel's *Teacher TV* series, and was recently the focus of the ABC special *Common Miracles*, a documentary spotlighting schools that work especially well.

NEA President Keith Geiger, pictured here, has visited with students in the school's loft, a special place for students to read and converse.

Familiar Faces

Mrs. Dozier Goes to Washington...1985 Teacher of the Year and NEA member Terry Dozier (People, May 1985) has been tapped to serve in the Clinton Administration. Dozier, a high school world history teacher from Columbia, South Carolina, will serve as a consultant to Education Secretary Richard Riley, the former governor of Dozier's state and a leader in education reform...


Larry Salzman

His Honor, Alan Page...NEA's 1991 Friend of Education Alan Page (near right) (Meet, September 1991) was elected to the Minnesota State Supreme Court during last year's elections. Page won his election the hard way, going to court to ensure his right to run in the election and then walking precincts, handing out campaign literature, and speaking at community rallies...

A Call to Reinvest...1992 Friend of Education Jonathan Kozol (Meet, September) joined NEA President Keith Geiger and other national education leaders February 5 to present Congress with more than 1,500 "Reinvest in America" resolutions. The resolutions, passed by local school boards, urge Congress to use the budget savings made possible by the end of the Cold War to "rebuild America and ensure that every child comes to school healthy and ready to learn." The "Reinvest in America" resolution is endorsed by NEA and seven other education groups...

Joe Di Dio

The kudos keep coming... Children's book author Gary Soto (below), the subject of a full-page interview in the November *NEA Today*, recently added an award for a video he coproduced to the many literary awards he's won. Soto's video, *The Pool Party,* received the Andrew Carnegie Medal from the Association for Library Services to Children, a division of the American Library Association...

Mr. Secretary... Harvard economist Robert Reich told *NEA Today* (Meet, November 1991), "Any society will have to put a high priority on education if it wants to keep jobs and income within its national borders."

Now, as the newly designated Secretary of Labor, Reich has a chance to do just that.

Bob Riha, Jr.

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Oliver Wendell Holmes

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SOUNDING BOARD

LOOKING FOR A SAFE HAVEN

We already help students with drug and alcohol problems, so why can't we help those struggling with their sexual identity?

By Richard Gurney

You've probably seen the statistic: The suicide rate among gay, lesbian, and bisexual students is two to three times the rate among straight students.

And you've probably seen news stories about current ballot measures in Oregon, Maine, Colorado, and Florida—all calling for or allowing discrimination against homosexuals.

Combine personal trauma and isolation with political repression, and you get intense educator interest in learning more about how to deal with gay and lesbian students in schools.

Since I retired last June, I became the facilitator of a gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth speakers bureau here in Portland, Oregon. I had seen over the past 10 years the growing numbers of students grappling with this issue in their high school years.

Being gay myself and out in the community, I would meet ex-students in the bars after they reached 21. One of the first things they would say was, "Well, we kind of figured you were." Followed up with, "Why couldn't you have been there for us? It would have been a big help."

My administration knew I was gay and was totally supportive of me, but I couldn't do anything active to help these kids. So I worked with our school psychologist—giving her information about the gay and lesbian community she could use to help the students who came to her.

Since I retired, I've become active, helping teens in the Portland area. All the kids I work with in the speakers bureau want their voices heard. They want both adults and teens to hear of the pain, pressure, and prejudice they went through in coming out to their school communities, friends, and families.

I recently brought gay teens to 15 speaking engagements over a two-month period. Fourteen of these 15 speaking sessions were to teacher groups, counselor workshops, and service providers to school districts.

The teens asked repeatedly for schools to be safe havens and for teachers to be supportive of their emotional needs.

To me, this proves the need for school personnel to be educated and sensitized to the issue of the sexual minorities.

Especially in the wake of the pain caused by the ballot measure here in Oregon, it seems that the general public needs to be aware of and educated to this issue. Education will help defuse the homophobia many non-gays have about sexual minorities.

This is expressed so adamantly by my youth speakers. In the past, schools have left the handling of these issues in the hands of home and church. But homes and churches haven't dealt well with the issue. How can they deal with it if they're ignorant of how it feels to be discriminated against as a member of the sexual minority?

This is why it's now necessary for educators to step in and at least deal with the issue of sensitivity and tolerance in the schools.

We need to provide the one place these students seek for a safe environment—the school building. We need to build sensitivity among school staffs and students.

This need pushed Karen Fletcher, a straight counselor at an alternate school here in Portland, to call me to arrange a speaker for her students. Karen decided that students in her school needed some preparation before they heard a teen panel of gays, lesbians, and bisexuals.

She also decided post-panel activities were necessary to assess how and what the impact was on the kids. She asked me, being the teacher, to sit down and develop lesson plans for us to use in these sessions.

So I came up with three pre-activities that would sensitize the students to prejudice and discrimination on a personal basis. Then we had the panel speak.

Activities afterwards were based on the action research model developed by Aloha High School in Beaverton, Oregon, where I used to teach. We wanted feedback from the students. What did they learn? What did they think? Did they have questions?

After establishing an intense session to sensitize the students, we knew we had to involve their teachers. We needed to take them through the same steps, not only to explain the steps, but also to have the staff experience the sensitizing process. So we developed a two-day workshop for school staff.

We feel this was so valuable in helping teach sensitivity about a minority that we hope other schools and districts across the country—not only in Oregon, Maine, Colorado, and Florida—take it upon themselves to educate their staffs as well as their students.

All the laws in the nation aren't going to stop sexual minorities from coming out of the closet. Since today's teens are coming out while still in high school, their own schools must educate and sensitize both staff and students to their struggle.

These gay, lesbian, and bisexual students need all the support they can get to grow into healthy, sane, productive adults. The challenge is ours as educators, and we need to offer every chance for these sexual minority students to succeed.

Richard Gurney, a retired high school English teacher from Beaverton, Oregon, is now working as the facilitator of a gay, lesbian, and bisexual speakers bureau in Portland. Readers interested in more details about the workshop he describes can contact Gurney and Karen Fletcher, 3914 S.E. Ivon, Portland, OR 97202 (503/236-4977).

Resources

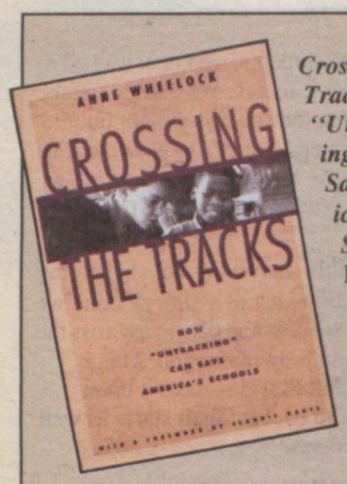
Organizations listed here are among many that have adopted positions on working with gay and lesbian students or can provide training assistance and guidelines for helping these students deal with their problems.

- American Psychological Association, Committee on Lesbian and Gay Concerns, 750 First St., N. E., Washington, DC 20002. 202/336-6052
- Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. 703/ 549-9110.
- Friends of Project 10, Inc., 7850 Melrose Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90046. 213/651-5200.
- INSITE, 1619 Sulgrave Ave., Baltimore, MD 21204. 410/367-7506.
- National Education Association, Gay and Lesbian Caucus, P. O. Box 314, Roosevelt, NJ 08555. 609/448-5215.
- National Network of Runaway and Youth Services, Suite 300, 1400 I St., N. W., Washington, DC 20005. 202/682-4114.
- Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, Box 27605, Washington, DC 20038. 202/638-4200.
- Sex Information and Education Council of the United States, 130 West 42nd St., Suite 2500, New York, NY 10036. 212/819-9770.

BOOK BEAT

Off-Track and Glad of It

For school people concerned about tracking, here are two recent books to help break the tracking habit.



Crossing the Tracks: How "Untracking" Can Save America's Schools. By Anne Wheelock. The New Press. 312 pp. $19.95.

Seeking Diversity. By Linda Rief. Heinemann. 336 pp. $27.95; paper, $19.50.

Tracking—dividing students into groups of high, average, and low achievers—has come under fire.

The practice was originally intended to help teachers deal with individual student differences. But critics say tracking fails to increase student learning. Worse, it does a lot of negative things, such as—

► exaggerate initial differences over time, since students in lower tracks invariably receive inferior curriculum and instruction

► deny access to high-quality learning to poor and minority students, who have a greater than average chance of being placed in lower tracks

► condemn lower-track students to permanent economic inferiority, thereby reinforcing class divisions in society.

Research on learning and intelligence indicates that ability is not fixed at birth and that almost all children can learn and reach higher achievement levels than was previously believed—given the right conditions.

Despite these convincing arguments, untracking poses enormous difficulties. Schools must rethink curriculum, instruction, assessment, organizational structures, and scheduling.

Anne Wheelock's *Crossing the Tracks* and Linda Rief's *Seeking Diversity* offer a wealth of resources for teachers and administrators contemplating the daunting task of untracking.

Crossing the Tracks reflects Anne Wheelock's belief that there is no single formula for successful untracking. Instead, she advocates a purposeful, thoughtful approach to change, providing strategies and tools from the experiences of 250 schools nationwide that are integrating their classrooms.

Case studies give examples of how faculties go about untracking. Topics include developing high-level curriculum, high expectations for all students, instruction and assessment in heterogeneous classrooms, and aspirations.

Wheelock believes in the importance of involving and informing everyone affected by untracking. She discusses parent and community involvement from two perspectives.

One viewpoint is that of would-be reformers challenged by parents who resist heterogeneous grouping. Wheelock supplies detailed guidelines for involving parents as partners with the school in efforts to avoid this problem.

A section on "Preparing for Tough Questions" contains sample responses to objections such as, "It seems to me that mixing groups of students together is going to hold back the smarter students."

The second perspective is that of reformers dealing with schools that are resisting pressure from the community to untrack. This situation is illustrated by school-community partnerships that began with parent concerns about equity.

Seeking Diversity **provides a glimpse** into one teacher's heterogeneous eighth grade language arts classroom where students from a variety of backgrounds become immersed in reading and writing.

In a chronological description of a school year, Linda Rief, who teaches at Oyster River Middle School in Durham, New Hampshire, explains how to organize materials and the classroom, establish expectations for student work, and provide opportunities for publication, such as writing contests and magazines that accept student work.

Rief wants her students to see learning as connected to real situations and issues beyond the classroom. One of her units, designed to promote reading, writing, and thinking about generations, begins with a student visit to a nursing home.

Subsequent activities include reading articles on aging, the elderly, and adolescence; interviewing grandparents; writing opinion papers on care of the elderly; and developing group oral presentations.

The chapter includes samples of student work and an extensive resource list of literature on generations.

Although their perspectives are very different, both books offer teachers a rich variety of practical ideas for untracking, combined with a thoughtful approach to the issues of heterogeneous grouping.

Reviewed by Susan Walters (left), who coordinates mentoring programs for preservice and first-year teachers in the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District in Wells, Maine.

RESEARCH CLUES

High-stakes Testing, Low-level Learning

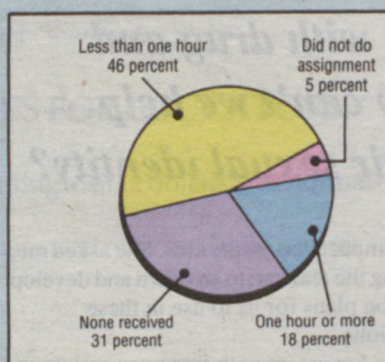
Unless conditions change, the student achievement component of the National Education Goals won't be met any time soon, says the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement. OERI based its prognosis on data in the November '91 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) report *Trends in Academic Progress*.

In math and science, today's 17-year-olds seem to be lacking—although today's nine-year-olds appear to know a bit more than the nine-year-olds of the late '70s.

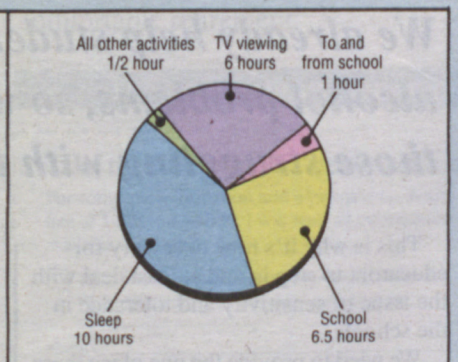
This latter finding may imply, say researchers, that when today's youngsters reach the age of 17, they'll perform a little better than their elders in math and science. Unfortunately, reading scores for nine-year-olds haven't improved in 20 years, suggesting that tomorrow's high school readers may be no better than today's.

Here are some of the data analyzed in the OERI research report *Meeting Goal 3: How Well Are We Doing?*

Mathematics. About 28 percent of the nine-year-olds in 1990 could add, subtract, multiply, and divide using whole numbers. Further, they could solve one-step problems. This compares to 20 percent who could demonstrate these skills in 1978.



Amount of Homework Completed Each Day by 9-year-olds



A Typical Day for a Child Who Watches TV for 6 Hours a Day

Science. Roughly one-third (31 percent) could understand and apply general information from the life and physical sciences, compared to 26 percent in 1977.

Reading. Eighteen percent—about the same percentage as in 1971—could search for specific information, interrelate ideas, and make generalizations.

What could turn these statistics around? OERI cites three major factors in determining how much students learn.

First, research shows that student achievement rises considerably when teachers assign—and students do—homework on a regular basis. But nearly as many nine-year-olds today (31 percent) as in 1984 (36 percent) say they aren't assigned any homework.

Second, students who read a lot tend to be better readers than those who don't—in part, probably, because practice makes perfect, in part because we enjoy doing things we're good at. Here the statistics are bleak: Only 34 percent of nine-year-old students say they read a book, magazine, or newspaper at least once a week. The percentage has been dropping by more than a point a year since 1984.

Third, too much TV viewing is associated with low academic achieving. Here again OERI cites dismal findings. The proportion of nine-year-olds watching TV for three or more hours a day rose from 55 percent in 1982 to 62 percent in 1990.

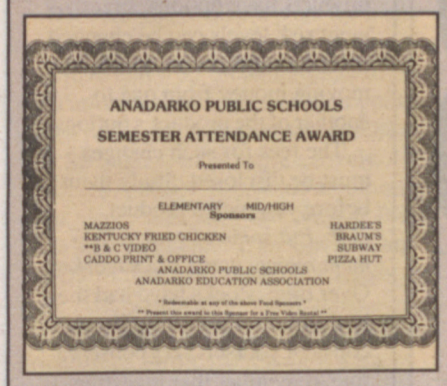
The OERI report concludes with a nudge to parents and schools to set tougher standards and expect more from students. "Without commitment and hard work on the part of the parents, students, and teachers, the goals will not be met," says the report.

—Victoria Lytle

IDEA EXCHANGE

Fast Food Feasts For Perfect Attendance

In our district, kids with perfect attendance for one semester get more than just a paper award. They also get a meal of their choice at any one of six fast-food restaurants and a free video rental.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Since we initiated the tangible reward system several years ago, the average number of students with perfect attendance in any one semester has doubled—from 200 to 400, or one fifth of our total enrollment.

The idea came from two of our teachers, and I — as then-president of the Anadarko Education Association—presented it to our school board. The board recommended that we check with some local merchants to see if they would donate their meals or products.

The merchants agreed enthusiastically. A printer produces our certificates.

The participating businesses get new and happy customers—and personal contact with the youngsters. One manager told me how much he enjoys having the kids come into his restaurant to ask what they can get for their awards: "When I tell them a free hamburger and a malt, their eyes really light up!"

Dale Hill
Sunset Elementary School
Anadarko, Oklahoma

Readin', Writin', and Recitin'

To help my students gain self-esteem and further their communication skills, each of my five communication skills classes ends the year by presenting a one-period program in the auditorium to at least one class from another department.

Every student is on the program, reading his or her best poem, essay, or short story from the past year. Kids with musical talent sing or play an instrument.

Although we consider every kid a winner, two teachers from another department do evaluate and rate the students in several categories.

At the end of each performance, the participants serve juice and doughnuts to the audience.

Angelee Grider
Sumner High School
St. Louis, Missouri

Worth Bragging About

To make sure our language arts students get credit for the good things they do in the classroom, we give them an active role in helping us prepare for parent-teacher conferences.

Each kid lists, on an index card, the outstanding grades, praiseworthy classroom behavior, and valuable extracurricular accomplishments parents should know about. The youngsters fill the cards with good news that we might overlook when sharing progress reports with their parents.

When presented with these cards, the parents are amused, yet visibly proud. We know this because they always ask to keep that little record of their child's successes.

Joyce Mohr and *Lori Slocum*
Tinora Junior High School
Defiance, Ohio

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TED033

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

The 403-B What's In It For Me?

Your 403(b) savings plan may have improved lately—but getting the most from your retirement dollars still takes work.

Old but still good—if you know what you're doing. That's Section 403(b) of the Internal Revenue Code. The plan was written in 1958 to give employees of nonprofit organizations like schools and hospitals a chance to put money into a retirement plan without having to pay income tax on it first.

"It was the first experiment with a salary reduction retirement plan that would let people put some money away before taxes," says Brian Ternoey, consultant at the investment firm of A. Foster Higgins & Co. in Princeton, N.J. "It was devised because nonprofits needed some tax help."

Since this quiet revolution in retirement savings possibilities, many varieties of tax shelter have blossomed—and some have faded—in response to national economic conditions and fiscal policies. But the 403(b) remains in operation, and it's still dedicated to its original aims. A 403(b) plan can work for you—if you choose it wisely.

Your 403(b) plan is equivalent to a contract between you and the insurance or mutual fund company that offers the investment. That differentiates it from a 401(k) plan, where an employer in the private sector contracts with someone to provide investment options.

Because you make your own contract for your 403(b) plan, you have a great deal more flexibility—and responsibility. If you're not careful, you might sign a contract that imposes more limitations on you than the IRS requires.

For example, money that was contributed to a 403(b) plan before January 1, 1987, need not be withdrawn when the participant reaches age 70 1/2, as is the case with money in 401(k) plans and Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs).

Yet many 403(b) contracts stipulate that the money be withdrawn at age 70 1/2. If you sign such a contract, and transfer pre-1987 money to the plan, you cannot take advantage of the more liberal withdrawal rules (to be discussed in this column next month).

Distribution and administrative costs to participants are higher for 403(b) plans than for 401(k) plans. That's partly because 403(b) plans don't enjoy efficiencies of scale and partly because many of them are sold by insurance agents who charge commissions.

Many employers who sponsor 403(b) plans are beginning to take a more active role in making certain their employees have good options.

"Many sponsors are coming to us and asking for advice on picking their 403(b) investments," says AnnaRose Oakley, a 403(b) specialist at the investment firm of Hewitt Associates.

Another driving force is legislation passed by Congress last year as part of a larger tax package (eventually vetoed by President Bush) that would allow public sector employees to choose between 403(b) and 401(k) plans. That proposal is expected to be passed as part of a tax package again this year, and it is focusing a great deal of attention on 403(b) plans.

As a result, many 403(b) sponsors are moving toward offering fewer, and better, options. "We just went in and looked at a plan with 90 options, and we cut them down to 23," says Brian Ternoey. And, according to Oakley, many employers are beginning to negotiate fees.

Here are some tips from consultants who work with 403(b) plans:

► *Look carefully at fees.* Companies that sell 403(b) products typically assign a representative to handle enrollments, conduct seminars, and so forth. This type of service is expensive, and it must be paid for out of fees on the products.

The most common such cost is a redemption fee for getting out of the product. Such a fee might be as high as 10 percent when you first buy into the plan, says Oakley. Then it might be reduced by 1 percentage point a year over a 10-year period. That means you'd better not buy a 403(b) unless you're going to stick with it.

"These plans are less liquid than 401(k) plans," notes Oakley. This is why 403(b) products have options. Investment risk levels can be changed without withdrawing funds, by moving money from one to another of the product's options.

The fees for such changes must be disclosed. Study them before you pick a product.

► *Put some of your retirement money in the stock market.* Over time, stocks have had the best investment return. If you consider yourself very conservative, remember that investing part of your money in stock also helps reduce risk.

"People think low-risk portfolios are bond portfolios," says Mark W. Scott, a consultant in the Wyatt Company, a San Francisco investment firm. "But you can reduce total risk if you have about 25 percent of your money in the stock market."

► *Diversify.* Decide how much you'll put into stocks and how much you'll put into fixed-income investments like bonds or a fixed-rate annuity. For example, you may decide to put 50 percent in stocks, 50 percent in fixed income.

Ideally, you should use more than one stock fund. A stock index fund, a conservative blue chip fund, or an equity income fund is a good base for the stock portion. You might put 60 percent of the money you allocate to stocks in an index fund and 40 percent in a more aggressive fund, such as an international fund. Check the performance of the funds carefully, and compare it to the market average measured by the Standard & Poor's 500 Stock Index.

—Mary Rowland

Next month: Withdrawal Options. For information on financial products and services available to NEA members, including the NEA Valuebuilder TDA, call NEA Member Benefits at 800/637-4636.

LOOKING AHEAD TO RETIREMENT

NEA-R Steps Up Organizing

NEA-Retired member and Association activist: it's a dual role many carry out by organizing local chapters of NEA-Retired.

This year, NEA-Retired is celebrating its 10th anniversary. Over the past decade, the organization's membership has grown to more than 110,000.

Most Retired organizing still concentrates on building state affiliates, but in states with strong Retired affiliates, organizers are turning to the local level.

Retirees join local chapters for many reasons, but one motive is paramount: the desire to carry out a commitment to education. For this, locals offer opportunities rarely found at the state level.

"Members can be more actively involved in Association activities through their local chapters," says NEA-R President Valois Pullen. "They can develop programs that meet the unique needs of their school district or community.

"Locals also help members maintain friendships formed while they were actively employed. Retired teacher-members can work directly with local teachers, mentoring those who need guidance. Both Retired teachers and support workers can tutor students."

The lead for organizing a local chapter can come from retirees themselves or from the local Association.

In Nebraska last spring, Lincoln Education Association President Ruth Ann Wylie, with support from Executive Director Jim Griess of the Nebraska State Education Association, persuaded two Retired members to organize a local NEA-R chapter.

Wylie explains: "As president, one of my goals is to extend LEA membership to our entire family of educators—especially retirees—in Lincoln. Retirees are a wonderful resource. They have wisdom and experience that can help us."

The two Retired members—Rita Coyle and Lorene Behrends—have spent much of their time since then organizing members. For Coyle, it was a desire to stay in touch with her local Association that led her to accept the responsibility.

As a first organizing step, Coyle and Behrends asked LEA for a list of 250 recent retirees. They sent a letter to each, inviting them to an organizational meeting. They also placed a meeting notice in the local newspaper.

"At that first meeting," says Coyle, "we discussed our reasons for organizing and gave the group a name—the Lincoln Education Association-Retired."

Subsequently, LEA-R members adopted a constitution and bylaws and established a board of directors—the four LEA-R officers and three members who handle membership, programming, and telephone tree logistics.

"Although we're still in the early stages of development, there's no way we could have come this far without the support of NSEA and LEA," says Coyle.

NSEA provided a prototype of a constitution and bylaws, and LEA provided secretarial help and mailing supplies. In return, LEA-R members worked for a school bond issue that was approved by voters last fall.

The key to success in local organizing is to utilize as many resources from your state and local active affiliates as you can, says Wylie. She also suggests recruiting members at official functions that honor retiring education employees.

Gail Folda

Lincoln Education Association President Ruth Ann Wylie (right) persuaded retired members Lorene Behrends (left) and Rita Coyle to help start a retiree chapter that's now grown to 50 members.

Elsewhere in Nebraska, Omaha public school retirees also began organizing a local chapter last spring, with the support of Omaha Education Association President Carolyn Grice.

"We held a retreat to kick things off," says Grice. "Within four months, OEA-Retired membership jumped from just three to 50."

A problem for OEA was how to make the local's $100 life membership affordable to retirees who were also paying $100 for life membership in both NSEA-R and NEA-R. The solution was to establish a system for deducting a portion of the dues each month from pension checks.

Michigan's Ann Speicher, vice president of NEA-R, emphasizes the importance of the meeting schedule in organizing efforts. Speicher—who organized the Sault Sainte Marie chapter in Michigan—says "the meeting schedule should accommodate the membership. What works for one group may not work for another."

For example, in Ann Arbor, where the membership is drawn from one school district and includes both retirees and preretirees, having meetings during lunch would exclude preretirees, so the chapter holds its meetings after school.

On the other hand, in the less populated Sault Sainte Marie, where membership includes only retirees and some live in outlying areas, luncheon meetings are ideal because members don't want to drive long distances at night. Some locals vary the meeting time throughout the year.

The Sault Sainte Marie chapter offers a mix of programs, some related to topics that interest older adults generally, and others related to issues that concern educators locally and at the state level.

In Montana, the two-year-old Billings chapter—like Sault Sainte Marie—draws its membership from a large region: the entire south-central region of the state.

"Many of the 15 or so communities surrounding Billings simply don't have enough retirees to organize their own chapter," explains organizer Jack Johnson, former chair of Montana Education Association-Retired. "In fact, some rural districts have only three or four retirees."

The 55 members of the Billings Education Association-Retired—also known as the Beartooth local of MEA-R—come from as far as 100 miles away to attend monthly meetings. BEA-R recruits about two or three members a month, most of them active Association members on the verge of retiring.

The Billings chapter focuses mainly on political activism. "Right now, we're working to get an annual cost-of-living allowance built into our pensions," says Johnson. "We also want to increase the benefits of our older members whose pensions may no longer be sufficient."

Political activism is one of the factors that distinguishes the Billings chapter from an older organization of retired teachers in the area. In fact, one of the challenges faced by many locals—including Lincoln, Omaha, and Sault Sainte Marie—is the existence of another retired organization.

Lincoln's Ruth Ann Wylie explains the situation in her area: "We had to overcome the resistance of some retired teachers to join LEA-R when they were already members of another retired teachers' group. Their response was 'I can't do both' or 'Why would I want to join LEA-R?'

"Our answer was: 'We're unified with NSEA and NEA. By joining LEA-R, retirees gain many Association benefits.' Retirees join an organization to stay active in education. They choose our organization because of its state and national connections."

"Local chapters are where Retired members can really make a difference," explains NEA-R President Valois Pullen, "for themselves, and for education."

Off and Running

The Michigan Education Association-Retired and the Michigan Education Association have joined forces to publish a handy booklet of tips for organizing local chapters. The booklet offers the following steps for getting started:

► *Meet with five people interested in organizing.*

► *Get a list of education retirees and preretirees in your area from your local or state active affiliate.* The list should date back several years.

► *Send a letter to each person on the list, inviting them to an organizational meeting.*

► *At the meeting, form a constitutional committee, and—if desired—a nominating committee to name officers.*

► *At the next meeting, adopt a constitution and bylaws and elect officers.* If there's no nominating committee, accept nominations from the floor.

DATA BANK

Women Legislators Reach Record Numbers

The percentage of women in state legislatures is up from 18.4 in 1992 to 20.2 this year. But there's a lot of variety from state to state.

The 10 states with the highest percentages of women legislators . . .

Washington	38.1 %
Arizona	35.6
Colorado	34.0
New Hampshire	34.0
Vermont	33.9
Idaho	31.4
Maine	31.2
Kansas	28.5
Nevada	27.0
Oregon	26.7

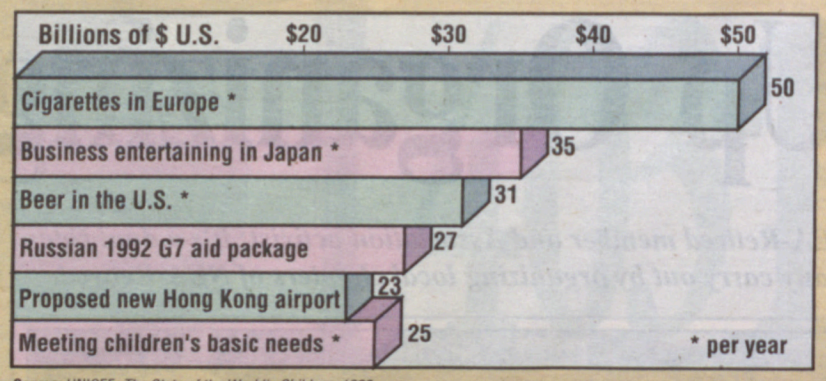
and the lowest . . .

Kentucky	4.3 %
Alabama	5.7
Louisiana	6.3
Oklahoma	9.4
Arkansas	9.6
Pennsylvania	9.9
Mississippi	10.9
Virginia	11.4
Tennessee	12.1
South Carolina	12.4

Source: Center for the American Woman and Politics at Rutgers University

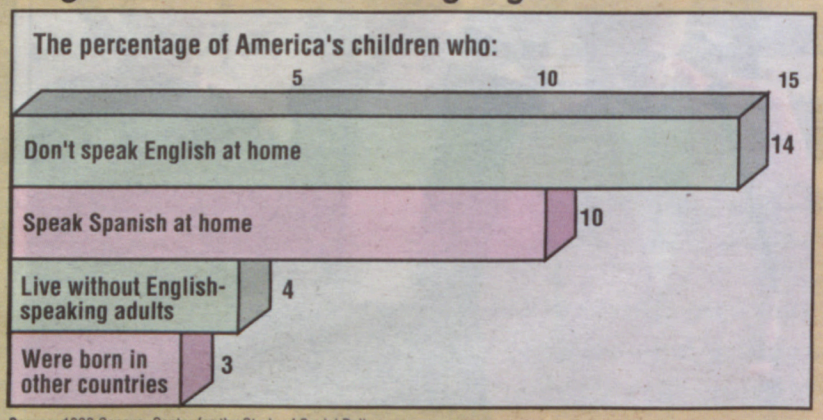
What Will $25 Billion Buy?

According to UNICEF, $25 billion a year for 10 years will buy an end to mass malnutrition, preventable disease, and widespread illiteracy among the world's children. A few comparisons:



Source: UNICEF, *The State of the World's Children, 1993.*

English as a Second Language



Source: 1990 Census, Center for the Study of Social Policy

This Year's Starting Salaries

Despite election-year optimism, experts predict a very tight job market for '93 college grads. For those who do get jobs, this year's starting salaries won't be much higher than last year's.

These estimates of starting salaries are based on a survey of 258 private and public businesses:

BACHELOR'S	1993	% change from '92
Engineering	$34,700	0.2 %
Computer	31,600	2.3
Chemistry	30,900	2.0
Math/Statistics	29,800	2.1
Accounting	29,100	1.3
Economics/Finance	28,700	2.3
Business Administration	27,700	2.0
Liberal Arts	27,700	1.0
Sales/Marketing	27,100	3.7
Teaching*	22,200	3.9
MASTER'S		
MBA	46,800	3.7
Engineering	41,000	2.3
Accounting	33,400	-3.9

Source: Northwestern University Lindquist-Endicott Report, *NEA Research Estimate for 1992-93

EDUCATION MARKETPLACE

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Educational Dinosaur Fossil Expedition. Small groups. June/Sept. Casual/friendly. Brochure. Box 1086, Drumheller, AB, Can T0J 0Y0; 403/823-6774.

Educators Bed & Breakfast Network. $25 per night for two. Private travel network. 1300+ locations. Box 5279, Eugene, OR 97405; 800/377-3480.

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The most acclaimed summer fellowship program on teaching the Holocaust and Jewish resistance. Overseas seminar for secondary school teachers, July 13-Aug. 4 in Israel, including Poland stopover. Sponsors: American Gathering of Jewish Holocaust Survivors, Educators' Chapter of Jewish Labor Committee and AFT. Program includes seminars with noted scholars, visits to Holocaust institutions, historic sites. Teachers pay $1,650 (half cost), covering air from New York, hotels, two meals a day, some trips. Application deadline: April 15. Write Jewish Labor Committee, 25 E. 21st Street, N.Y., NY 10010.

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Your NEA

Q & A

Bankrolling Progress

What is the National Foundation for the Improvement of Education?
NFIE was created by NEA in 1969 to identify ways of improving education. It began giving grants in 1985. NFIE stands out among philanthropies because of its aim: to give school employees the support and resources they need to pursue excellence in teaching and learning.

With support from the NEA, as well as corporations, private foundations, and individuals, NFIE gives school employees professional development, leadership opportunities, and financial help.

What are some of NFIE's programs?

► The Dropout Prevention Program supports projects that teachers design and direct. The program provides both financial support and program development.

► The Christa McAuliffe Institute for Educational Pioneering is a national teacher recognition and professional development program that stimulates exploration into the education process.

► The Learning Tomorrow program supports educators who are exploring how new technologies can improve teaching and learning.

What is NEA's investment in NFIE?
In 1987, NEA's commitment to improving education led then NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell to ask RA delegates to direct $1 of member dues to build NFIE's endowment. NEA contributions will boost the endowment to nearly $11 million by the end of this summer. Ongoing interest from the endowment will provide funds for future innovative education projects.

What has been NFIE's major accomplishment?
NFIE's efforts give a much wider role to teachers as experts. So often political leaders look to others for answers when in fact teachers have the resources and authority to create programs that have lasting value.

The results of the Dropout Prevention grants, for example, indicate just how effective teacher-inspired projects are. When NFIE funding for the projects ends, 80 percent of the programs continue.

How can an NEA member learn more about NFIE's programs?
Contact NFIE at 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

SPEAKING OUT ON THE ISSUES

TV By, For, and About Teachers

For the first time in television history, education is the subject—and teachers are in control—of a regular nationwide series.

Teacher TV, a weekly magazine program co-produced by NEA and The Learning Channel, has completed one year on the air. In its first six months, the show won a prestigious CINE Golden Eagle Award and a silver medal at the 1992 International Film and Television Festival of New York.

NEA's participation gives *Teacher TV* a fresh classroom flavor. In each episode, *Teacher TV* shows candid profiles of teachers, schools, and communities that are challenging the status quo. The program offers professional development, too—information on timely classroom trends, strategies, and how-to advice.

Some *Teacher TV* topics so far: violence, time, community involvement, student motivation, student assessment, school restructuring, and health education. Scheduled for future shows are higher-order thinking skills, the art of learning, the ABCs of getting resources, standards, and students' societal problems. (For March and April topics, see page 10.)

IN HISTORY

After the success of Sputnik spurred fears that the Soviet Union was winning the space race, Congress funded the 1958 National Defense Education Act (NDEA).

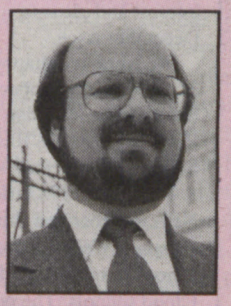
The NDEA, backed by NEA as a workable way to improve education, provided federal money to improve education in science, mathematics, and foreign languages and to support college students in these disciplines.

A second proposal to recognize—and fund—education as national defense, the American Defense Education Act (ADEA), was introduced in the early 1980s. Strongly backed by NEA, the ADEA would have directed more funds to improving math, science, and foreign language study. But the climate on Capitol Hill had chilled. ADEA died in Congress.

WORKING FOR YOU

Defending Your Life

NEA Government Relations staffer Joel Packer has an agenda that goes beyond defending the lives of school employees. As Packer deals with health and safety issues, he's helping to protect the 41 million children who attend the nation's public schools.



According to Packer, about 88 percent of those schools were constructed before the 1980s. Their built-in health hazards—from asbestos to lead and radon—call for an advocate in Washington who can monitor federal legislation and detailed regulations on these topics. That's Packer's role.

If school districts are left to their own devices, he's found, they may not appropriate funds for environmental clean-up efforts.

"We believe a voluntary approach hasn't worked," says Packer. "Many administrators have been opposing the clean-up efforts as too expensive."

Currently, Packer is NEA's point person, working together with PTA representatives, in pushing Congress to extend and strengthen the two-part Lead Contamination Control Act.

One part deals with the problem of lead in school drinking water, and the other restores funding for lead screening programs among children.

Packer also monitors Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations to make sure they cover all public employees. Only about half the states have laws protecting their public employees.

SHORT TAKES

The campaign continues. The message: Don't Smoke. The audience: nearly three million fifth graders targeted as the Smoke-Free Class of 2000. Each year, these students' teachers receive special kits, including lesson plans. This year there's also a special book cover contest. To order the kits at $.80 each, or for more details about the NEA-backed campaign or contest (deadline is March 19), call 800/562-4447 or contact your local American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, or American Lung Association. . .**You're not alone.** If you or your school's been the target of censors, you have company and you can get help. Surveys show an upsurge of attempts to censor school materials—everything from classic books to entire curriculums. In response, NEA has set up a special network linking members who, having warded off censorship efforts, can help other members. For more information, contact NEA staffer Paul Putnam at NEA Human and Civil Rights, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington DC 20036. . .**Recognizing the Ellis Island Centennial** is part of NEA's ongoing effort to promote understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. For more than six decades—1892 to 1954—the immigrant depot beneath the Statue of Liberty processed millions of men, women, and children. For information about the Ellis Island Monument and Immigration Museum, contact the Superintendent, Statue of Liberty National Monument, Liberty Island, New York, NY 10004.

SMOKE-FREE CLASS OF 2000™

Letters

Kudos for the Union

I'd like to comment on Priscilla Jackman's letter (December) disagreeing with another teacher's complaints about extending the school day.

I think Ms. Jackman misunderstands the teacher's concerns. Yes, we are professionals, but we probably have less control and power over our own lives than those in any other profession.

Before teachers' unions, pay was dismally low, and teachers were puppets controlled by administrators and school boards.

Thank goodness for teachers' unions and contracts that allow us to practice our profession and still maintain some control over our working conditions.

Barbara Lagoon
Springdale, Pennsylvania

Union as 'Obstacle'

I appreciate the way *NEA Today* covers the ways some schools are reforming or restructuring to meet the needs of today's students.

Apparently you agree that the industrial model of education is no longer appropriate as we approach the 21st century. Many teachers and administrators are addressing the need for change.

Still, I'm concerned that teachers' unions continue to cling to the old industrial model of labor union contract negotiations.

Sometimes the union becomes an obstacle to much-needed modernization in the name of contract protection. We need to be very careful that we aren't putting our priorities before the needs of our students.

It would be interesting—and timely—to read of schools where the union, administrators, and teachers are working collaboratively to bring their students into the 21st century.

Sara M. Kelly
Corcoran, California

Ed note: See this month's Debate on page 35.

In Defense of Bush

I read with disgust NEA President Keith Geiger's remarks (National News, December): "Beginning Inauguration Day, January 20, the children of America will have a true advocate in the White House."

This is a thoughtless and untrue attack on former President George Bush.

To imply that President Bush isn't concerned and doesn't care about the children of America will not win Mr. Geiger and the NEA many friends among the 57 percent of those Americans, including myself, who did not vote for Mr. Clinton.

As a Republican and a 20-year member of NEA, I grow increasingly weary of the constant politicizing of your publication. Surely, the hundreds of thousands of conservative NEA members deserve some consideration and relief from this constant and dogmatic liberal bombardment.

In spite of my deep conviction and faith in my local and state Associations, my willingness to join each year becomes substantially diminished when I read articles like the aforementioned.

Dennis Schachterle
Lake Mills, Iowa

More Heroes

Both my husband and I read with interest and pleasure your recent December issue.

We were very happy to see that another NEA member is working at the Red Cloud Indian School on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota (Heroes and Zeroes).

My husband Maurice is a former NEA member and I'm an active member. We spent the 1991-92 school year working for the Red Cloud schools. The poverty of the area is a fact, but the beauty of the people is also a reality.

We volunteered our time and are continuing to work on behalf of the school by speaking to various school, church, and civic groups in our area.

Many are generously donating to "our children." They are truly deserving of any help we can provide.

Please continue to publish interesting items like this one. The Red Cloud Indian School is doing a fine job in an area where poverty is a way of life.

Barbara Montgomery
Chambersburg, Pennsylvania

'Weed Out Whiners'

Those quoted in "Tired of Being Tired" (Cover story, November) aren't in the majority. Your article gives all teachers a reputation of being "teach-grab money-run" professionals.

Many of the teachers in our school system are at school long beyond the required contract hours of 7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. These teachers do this willingly and of their own accord. Each of these same people carries work home as well.

I feel it's time we weeded out the clock-watchers, whiners, and those who need to be "carried to their cars." They should never have become teachers in the first place.

The best teachers I've observed and encountered in my many years as a teacher, all seem to have had a relative or a dedicated teacher somewhere in their past who got the message across to them that this is an all-engrossing and very important role we all have.

Real teachers know what their role in life is. They accept it gladly and without griping. The pleasures of serving and giving of ourselves to aid a child to learn are what teaching is all about.

Jacquelyn Kriewaldt
Bowler, Wisconsin

The Other Half

You've presented only half the story about Whittle Communications (Heroes and Zeroes, December). In response to criticisms about a diminution of news content, Whittle's morning program recently returned to a format that concentrates almost exclusively on breaking news and social issues.

Recent story topics include AIDS, Somalia, and the Presidential election. Visuals, repetition of important terminology, and pop quiz questions all contribute to students' learning opportunities.

"Are a few borrowed TV sets worth this price?" you ask.

At our school, seventh grade classes are alternating with one another to present the morning announcements, via Channel One, schoolwide. And a seventh-grade student, with the guidance of our media specialist, is presenting his own weekly show.

Yes, they're worth it.

Kristine Arntsen
Fairfield, Maine

Blinded?

It always amazes me how much time NEA President Keith Geiger spends on political issues and how little time he devotes to education (President's Viewpoint, December).

As a fellow educator, I always thought objectivity was important. Mr. Geiger's blind and intoxicated devotion to President Clinton is laughable.

Geiger writes, "We'll first sense this change of course in President Clinton's choice of Cabinet members. Those choices will tell us that we now have a President prepared to give real meaning to the phrase 'a kinder, gentler America.'"

Education, experience, and character really aren't the issues, Geiger is saying. The only thing that matters is that the new Cabinet members are Democrats and not Republicans!

He also calls the $4 trillion national debt a giant albatross hanging around our nation's neck—and, in the same breath, welcomes the new relationship between Clinton and the Congress. Still concerned about the national deficit, Keith?

Finally, Geiger lauds the end of the era of privatization for education. When the world is crying out for free markets and free minds, Mr. Geiger wants more beachheads of bureaucracy.

Doug Norlander
Shoreview, Minnesota

Choice Isn't Free

Sherry Kaestner and Jeff Parish (Letters, December) find something shameful in a public school teacher's decision to place her own children in a private, Christian school.

Kaestner writes, "I say shame on you... for not supporting the public education system that is helping to support your family financially."

Are Kaestner and Parish not aware that in large U.S. cities—including Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, and Atlanta—about 25 percent of the public school teachers enroll their children in private schools?

Are they surprised that Bill Clinton—the "public education" President, thoroughly supported by the NEA—has placed his own daughter in Sidwell Friends, one of the most prestigious, elite private schools in Washington, D.C.?

Would they deny this "choice" to the President and their fellow teachers?

The message is clear: choice is already available. Parish is correct when he says that the right to send a child to a private school "is exercised when the family can afford it."

The President and most public school teachers have a choice; they can afford it. Too bad we can't say the same for poor inner-city kids.

Weldon Burge
Wilmington, Delaware

Signe Wilkinson, Philadelphia Daily News, Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate

What's your opinion? NEA members are cordially invited to use this page to exchange ideas with their colleagues around the nation. We reserve the right to edit letters for length. Address correspondence to "Letters," 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Debate

Is Confrontation Bargaining Obsolete?

YES

Judy Reall has been president of the Lancaster (Ohio) Education Association for the past seven years. She is currently a teacher coordinator for staff relations and school restructuring. She also chairs the OEA Resolutions Commission and sits on the NEA Resolutions Committee.

NO

Tim McKinney

Randi Beckmann teaches first grade in Ithaca, New York. She is a member of the Ithaca Teachers Association negotiation team and a member of the Steering Committee of the Tompkins Cortland Labor Coalition. She received a 1988-89 Fulbright Teaching Exchange Award to England.

If confrontational bargaining isn't obsolete, it should be.

I believe if public schools are going to survive, we (teachers, support personnel, administrators, and board members) must all work together to meet the needs of all we serve— students, parents, and the community. That includes bargaining in such a way that we strive together to meet the needs of all.

Until 1990, those of us in the Lancaster school district participated vigorously in confrontational bargaining. Together we honed our skills of saying no and shoving written language across the table. Often, in fact, the only persons allowed to talk were the board's attorney and our NEA UniServ consultant.

In the fall of 1987, things came to a head. The Association set a strike date of Monday, October 12. The Board had declared impasse in June, and we'd been meeting with a federal mediator.

Once the strike date was set, both sides spent much energy and money in preparation. Bitterness built up as factions in the community began to take sides. We were still negotiating, but name calling and shouting became a part of the bargaining process.

On Thursday, October 8, we negotiated until 4 a.m. Settlement was reached at 2 p.m. the next day.

Both sides were exhausted. We were certainly not meeting the needs of our students, and certainly not feeling good about each other.

Over the next three years many factors and people contributed to the beginnings of a new relationship between labor and management.

The leaders of both management and labor learned to take risks and started to trust each other. At times this was a struggle, especially when accusations of "being in bed together" surfaced. But shared leadership of the district was beginning to work.

By 1990, we had achieved the right atmosphere for a different kind of negotiations. We were the first district in central Ohio to attempt concentrated/principled bargaining (which involves mutual recognition of the interest of each side in bargaining issues).

This technique is based on the principles outlined in the Harvard Negotiations Project's work, *Getting to Yes*.

If nonconfrontational bargaining is to work, both the Association and the board must be ready for collaboration.

In 1990, Superintendent John Baughman, our UniServ rep, Jeff Westfall, and I all felt we had a strong enough relationship to try out a concentrated/principled bargaining approach. To make it easier to think in collaborative terms, our teams went to a hotel 30 miles away for three days.

We were new to this process, so we didn't finish in three days. But at no time did I feel we wouldn't settle. We continued to sit around a table next to those from the "other side," and we continued to communicate. We met four more times, and before school started, we had a contract.

That contract is evidence of collaboration. It includes provisions for site-based decision making, release time for the Association president to coordinate staff relations and restructuring, and a grievance procedure that requires the parties to try to solve problems before filing.

Now it's time for my district to negotiate again. Using concentrated/principled bargaining takes a commitment by both sides to look beyond polarizing rhetoric to recognize each other's interests. We'll work to limit the number of issues and use subcommittees of bargaining team members to write the concept language and resolve specific issues. We will work usually two or three days at a location remote from the school district, like a hotel or state park.

This type of bargaining is not for everyone right away. Readiness is an important factor, and change among recalcitrant school boards can be slow. But I believe we must move in this direction. It takes time, it takes courage, and it takes readiness to accept risks. If public education is going to survive in this country, I believe we must work together toward making confrontational bargaining obsolete.

What do you do when a school board comes to the bargaining table proposing changes that are bad for teachers, students, and the whole education system?

How should an Association respond when administrators hand down a wholly rewritten contract that removes all references to teacher empowerment and decision making, language that protects academic freedom, and teacher input into textbook selection?

Our Association received such a proposal—a proposal that would have gutted our contract. Here's our story.

Last spring I was excited about the possibility of cooperative bargaining and the results it could bring. We were interested in *real* power sharing, something that amounted to more than just being "consulted" on decisions that had already been made. The school board had said it was committed to site-based management.

Then we received the board's proposal. Despite the fact that board members paid lip service to trendy participation in decision making, their proposal would simply strengthen their traditional power base. Our Association was totally left out.

In response, we formed a crisis committee with representatives from each of our 12 school buildings. We quickly built coalitions in the community with respected professionals, retired teachers, parents, political leaders, and other unions.

We passed out buttons at our local Labor Day picnic saying, "Give Ithaca Teachers the Respect They Deserve." We handed out informational bookmarks at the Friends of the Library Book Sale.

We gave out literature at our schools' open house events. We organized phone calls to board members registering concern about our contract dispute.

We also started a Solidarity Pledge Card Drive, asking people to make phone calls to Association members, write letters to the editor, help with mailings to the community, and serve on our crisis committees.

For months the school board refused to respond to these calls and letters. Negotiations continued to be disappointing.

To dramatize our plight, we planned a rally prior to a school board meeting and asked teachers and community members to speak out during the open part of the board agenda. When 500 people showed up, the board chair immediately adjourned the meeting and the superintendent called the police to disperse the astonished crowd.

After this debacle, the board agreed to hold a community forum. This time 600 Association supporters showed up. Forty people spoke, 38 of them voicing strong support for our goals. Although the board later tried to discredit our Association, community pressure increased and we eventually reached a tentative agreement.

What have been the results of "confrontational bargaining"? In addition to gains at the table, our teachers are united and have built a more participative Association. We have a chastened, educated school board. We have forged bonds with our community.

I find it ironic that we've had to be confrontational over our desire for more collaboration. But if it takes confrontation to establish true participation, who among us would forego that kind of professionalism and walk away from a struggle?

We're not only "confronting" the board of education over issues of what is best for students, but, by example, reminding ourselves and our children of the importance of vigorously exercising our democratic rights.

Yes, our professionalism has been under attack. And we've expressed ourselves forcefully. We know it's been important for people not just to hear our concerns, but also to listen to the emotion in our voices. By speaking out strongly and with feeling, we show we care about children, schools, and our profession.

Had we capitulated, our members would have been left demoralized, our Association enfeebled, the community led by the nose. Worst of all, our surrender would have begun the dismantling of one of the finest educational systems in New York State.

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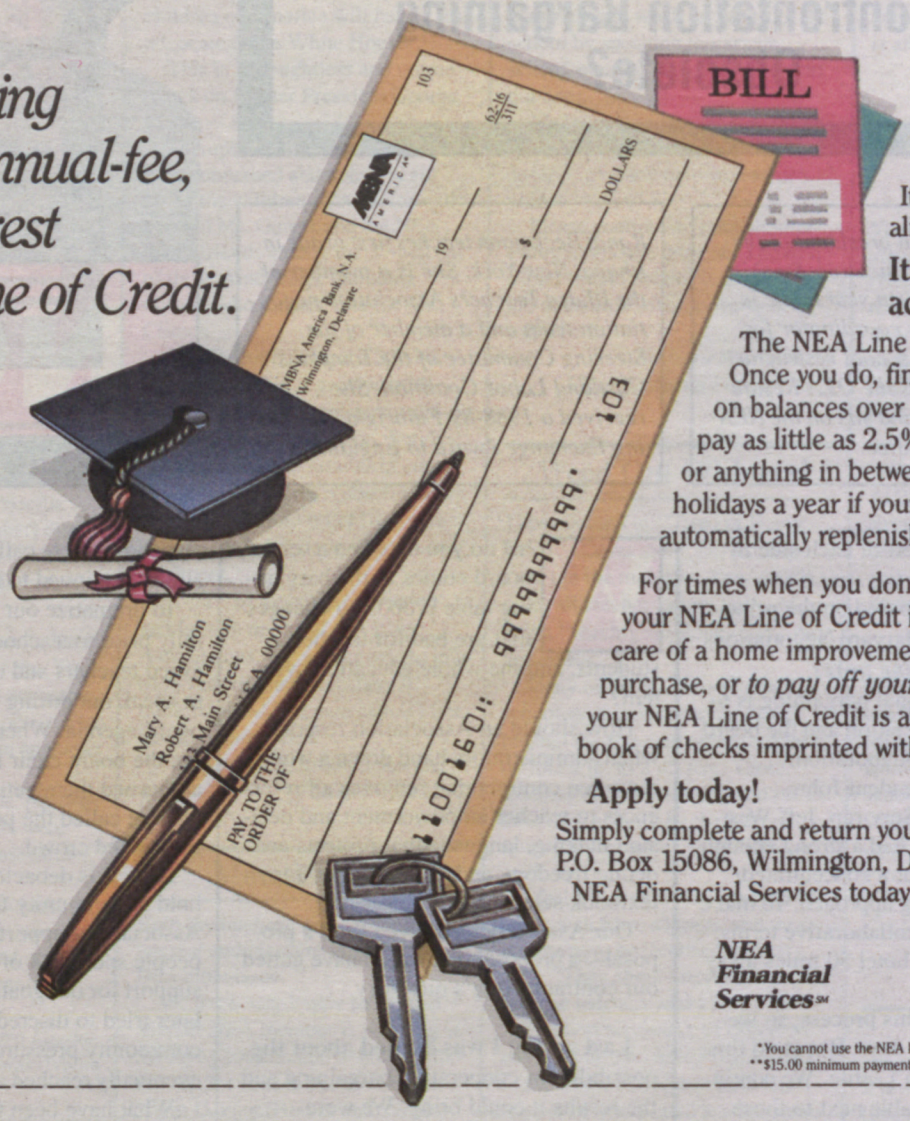

The NEA knows there may be times when you need a supplemental source of ready credit. That's why the NEA Line of Credit was developed for you. It gives you up to $7,500 worth of credit and personalized checks to access it—anytime you need it.*

It looks like a personal check, acts like a credit card.

The NEA Line of Credit costs you nothing until you use it. Once you do, finance charges are a low 15.9% APR (14.9% on balances over $2,500). It features genuine payment flexibility—pay as little as 2.5% of your balance monthly,** the full amount, or anything in between. And you can take two monthly payment holidays a year if your account is in good standing† Your payments automatically replenish your account—so you never have to reapply.

For times when you don't want to use a credit card, we think you'll find your NEA Line of Credit is a sensible way to pay unexpected bills, take care of a home improvement project, pay tuition, make a once-in-a-lifetime purchase, or *to pay off your high-interest credit cards!* Once the amount of your NEA Line of Credit is approved, MBNA America® will forward your free book of checks imprinted with your name and address.

Apply today!

Simply complete and return your signed application form to: **MBNA America,®** P.O. Box 15086, Wilmington, DE 19885-9973. Or to apply by phone, call NEA Financial Services today at **1-800-468-7632.**

NEA Financial Services℠

nea Member Benefits

MBNA AMERICA® Member FDIC

*You cannot use the NEA Line of Credit to pay other accounts with MBNA America Bank, N.A.
**$15.00 minimum payment per month. †Finance charges will continue to accrue.

VABD 08:100-154

Apply for your *no-annual-fee, low-interest* NEA Line of Credit today.

☐ **Yes!** I am applying for the NEA Line of Credit with a credit line up to $7,500 and all the other benefits described above. (NOTE: This is not an application for a corporate account.)

All applicants must complete.

Name as you would like it to appear on the checks:

First M.I. Last

Present Address _____

(City) (State) (Zip)

Previous Address _____
(If at current address less than three years.)

Home Phone ( ) _____ Are you: ☐ Renting ☐ Own ☐ Buying Years There _____

Work Phone ( ) _____ Monthly Payment $ _____

Social Security Number _____ Date of Birth _____

NEA MasterCard® Card Number _____
(if applicable)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Present Employer _____ Position _____ Years There _____

Annual Salary*$ _____ Other Income*$ _____ Source _____

*Alimony, child support, spousal income, or separate maintenance income need not be revealed if you do not wish it considered as a basis of repayment.

NEA State Association _____

Mother's Maiden Name or Code Word _____
(For use when you request special action taken on your account.)

I have read this application and everything I have stated in it is true. MBNA America Bank, N.A. is authorized to check my credit, employment history or any other information and credit experience with me. I understand that the acceptance or use of the NEA Line of Credit will be subject to the terms of this application and the Line of Credit Agreement that will be sent with the checks, and agree to be responsible for all charges incurred according to such terms. By signing this application, I certify that I am a member in good standing of the National Education Association.

X _____
Applicant Signature Date

IMMEDIATE CASH ADVANCE REQUEST

Upon approval of my NEA Line of Credit account, please immediately forward to me a check in the amount** of $ _____ _____ _____
**Up to credit limit assigned. Applicant Initial Date

CO-APPLICANT OR AUTHORIZED USER (Optional)

If you wish additional checks issued to a co-applicant or an authorized user over 18 years of age, complete the information below.

Co-applicant or authorized user name as you would like it to appear on the checks:

First M.I. Last

Relationship _____ Social Security Number _____

Work Phone ( ) _____ Employer _____ Position _____

Years There _____ Annual Salary*$ _____ Other Income*$ _____ Source _____

*Alimony, child support, spousal income, or separate maintenance income need not be revealed if you do not wish it considered as a basis of repayment.

I have read this application and everything I have stated in it is true. MBNA America Bank, N.A. is authorized to check my credit, employment history or any other information and credit experience with me. I understand that the acceptance or use of the NEA Line of Credit issued will be subject to the terms of this application and the Line of Credit Agreement that will be sent with the checks, and agree to be responsible for all charges incurred according to such terms.

X _____
Co-Applicant Signature Date

Annual Fee	None
Annual Percentage Rate	15.9%, 14.9% for portion of average daily balance over $2,500.
Grace Period	You will bear finance charges from the date your check is presented to MBNA for payment.
Method of Computing the Balance for Cash Advances	Average daily balance.
Fees for Paying Late or Exceeding the Credit Limit	Late Payment Fee: $10 Over-the-Credit-Limit Fee: $10

The NEA Line of Credit is issued and administered by MBNA America Bank, N.A., the bank behind all NEA credit cards.
MBNA America® is a national provider of financial services with a three-star rating (the highest rating possible) from VERIBANC, Inc., a nationally recognized bank-rating service.
MBNA America® is a federally registered service mark of MBNA America Bank, N.A.
Note: Not available in all states
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